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A MOTHER'S CURSE.

An American Drama.

IN FIVE ACTS.

—WRITTEN FOR—

CYRUS B. LAMBERT,

—BY—

JAMES W. LONG.

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR
1889, BY CYRUS B. LAMBERT, IN THE OFFICE OF
THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

PUBLISHED BY
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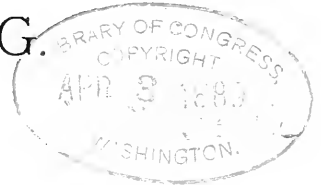
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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Capt. Chas. Vincent—An officer in the Commissary Department, U. S. A.

Major Robert Taylor, U. S. A.

Hiram Dawson—A Government Detective.

Patrick Flavan—An old family servant in the Vincent family, and a native of the “auld sod.”

Prof. Lighter—An æreonaut.

Policeman, etc.

Alice Vincent—Mother of Charles Vincent.

Grace Vincent—Wife of Charles Vincent.

Lottie Vincent—Daughter of Charles Vincent.

Nellie Gordon—Cousin and accomplice to Major Taylor.

Meg Marineau—A gypsey fortune teller.

Mary Donovan—A good looking Irish girl, nurse to Lottie Vincent, full of intrigue and to whom Pat Flavan jist takes off his hat, you know.

Chorus, etc.

A MOTHER'S CURSE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Parlor in home of Alice Vincent. To R. piano near flat. To L. Divan and around the stage parlor furniture. To L., near front, a table at which sitting Charles Vincent is discovered as curtain rises.*

Vincent.—Heighho! what is life after all? The past we know and can see how many mistakes could have been corrected. The present we enjoy, or endure, and oftentimes repeat the same mistakes we have once regretted. But the future? (*rises and advances to center of stage*). Oh! the future is to all of us a garden of flowers. Who ever plants seeds of unhappiness in the garden of the future? Who ever, with their pencils, paints a cloud in the sky of the future? Who ever draws upon the alchemy of nature for a pain in the future? Who ever imagines a heart ache in the future? Oh, happy Arcadia! you begin with the cradle, and end only with eternity, with its clouds rose-tinted, by your happy hopes and predictions. Why should we do this? We are borrowing from the future every day, and destroying its hopes by the irresistible logic of the present. Hopes die for want of fruition. Golden promises fade away, unfulfilled, and death ends all. But a truce to this. I will drive away dull forebodings with a song. (*Sings: "It is strange, etc."*)

SONG.

It is strange that the joy of happy hours
Should be marred by the chill of a blighted trust;
It is strange, that the beauty of the flowers
Should but end in a mixture with silent dust.

Oh, where are the hopes and the loves; where the tears,
That lived with our lives, and that tempered life's gales;
It is strange they have faded with the years
And becalmed we are lying with empty sails.

Vincent (speaks). Well, away with this feeling. I have

of popularity that will elect me to office. I will be the people's choice. What is to prevent it? (*Rises and walks from R. to L. across stage.*) First, lawyer, then Prosecuting Attorney, then to the Legislature, then to Congress, then a Senator; but hold on; I must be a Circuit Judge first, *then* Senator. Then what is to prevent me from being President? With all this I will have the smiles of fair women at my beck and fortune will smile on me, (*Enters at back Meg Marineau who advances towards Vincent*) and I will be her favored child. (*Discovers Marineau.*) Hello! my picturesque gypsy, from what forest do you come?

Marineau—Let me tell your fortune, my gallant gentleman.

Vincent (*holding out his hand, laughing*)—Oh well, give me the best you have. (*Marineau takes his hand and looks intently at it.*)

Marineau.—No lines cross; an even life; a dexter line the broadest; a happy life. Honors, riches, everything that heart could wish for.

Vincent (*laughing*).—That is worth a dollar anyway. Here, my good woman (*Hands her a silver dollar, and then holds out his hand again, which Marineau takes in hers, looks at it and starts as if alarmed.*)

Marineau (*hastily and quickly*).—The lines have changed. The blue blood has faded from the dexter line and gone to the sinister. The lines are crossed. The blood is purple and betokens trouble. Ah, the crossed lines are filling. One near and dear to you has cursed you and invoked maledictions upon your head. The blood is receding. You will die by the hand of an assassin.

Vincent (*angrily*).—Begone! bird of evil omen. You have your money. Now go and hide it. (*Marineau shrinks away towards doors in flat followed by Vincent. As she exits Pat Flavan enters with letters, which he hands to Vincent.*)

Pat.—And who the divil is that craft, mister Charles? She looks like a cross between a barber's pole and a circus rider.

Vincent (*tearing open letter*).—Oh, that is a gypsy fortune teller, Pat. She has put me out a little by prognosticating too much bad luck for me. I have been cursed by one who is near and dear to me, and am going to be killed by an assassin. (*Looks at letter as he talks.*)

Pat—Niver ye fear, Mister Charles. As long as Pat Flavan can ate three square meals a day it will niver do for any one to swear forninst to yes, nor to assassinate you

neither. I'm cork pine, ten logs to the tree, and sold for one hundred and twenty dollars a thousand.

Vincent.—I always knew that you were a lumbering kind of a fellow, Pat. But I thank you for your honest offer of guardianship. (*Aside.*) A letter with a good offer in it for me to go to New York. I will go and answer it at once. (*Exit through L door.*)

Pat.—I have been thinking a good deal lately about the mutability of human affairs. There is Bridget O'Connor. Oh, my! but she is swate wid her rosy cheeks, black eyes and lips like a blood beet. I call her a human affair. She is mutability, too, for I asked Mister Charles what it meant and he told me it was orny thing that changed. Bridget has changed; she loved me once on a time, but now she has gone back on me.

SONG—"She has gone back on me."

But I must go back to my work now. Bridget can go with her new love and I'll—I'll—what will I do? I'll hunt for a new one wid all the charms of a Venus. (*Exit at door at back.*)

(*Enter at L Vincent.*)

Vincent.—I have written to my friend that I will accept his offer. Why should I stay here in idleness? Other men have gone out into the wide world and have been the better for a few rough knocks. Why should I not do the same? Besides, my life here is not exactly Elysian (*shrugs his shoulders and laughs*). Given, a premises. I love a fair young maiden, who also smiles upon me. Madam Mere does not smile upon the match, and Lulu and I cannot marry, for, unfortunately, my mama holds the purse strings, and she will not open the receptacle of wealth except at her own sweet pleasure, and it is not her own sweet pleasure to open it for this occasion. (*Laughs.*) She wants me to marry a perpendicular, acidulous accident of wealth and extreme respectability, which I decline to do, having never had any experience in making love to an iceberg. Ah! I hear my mother's footsteps. I will be propriety itself. (*Sits himself on divan. As he does so, enter Alice Vincent, who advances and takes seat at table. Vincent rises as his mother enters and bows to her; then resumes his seat.*)

Alice V.—Ah, my son! as years advance I hope to see you become more dignified, and I can already see an improvement. Now one thing I must suggest. Try, some occupation to keep you busy. Work that is not ignoble.

Charles V.—Just the thing, my dear madame, I have

been thinking about. Work is the very thing that I need, for as it is, I am spoiling for exercise. You will not sanction my marriage with Lu ———.

*Mrs. V. (angrily).—*Excuse me for interrupting you. No! I will not sanction your sacrifice of a splendid position to the fancied charms of a round doll face. If you would lay seige to the heart of Abigail Springer now—
(*Charles shudders.*)

Why that shudder? (*Rising and facing her son*). I tell you what boy, that I do not even hope that she would say you yea, but still she might. Women you know are foolish at times, and sometimes allow a passing fancy to run away with their judgment. There you would have wealth and position. (*Slowly as she walks backwards and forwards.*) Over their door, cut into the stone is a coat of arms. It is English, and belongs to them by lineage and hereditary. Blue blood runs in their veins, and if Abigail would only smile on you, I would be as happy as a woman with a broken heart can be. But you prefer a plebian, whose only merit is a pretty face and a tongue to prattle platitudes. (*Advancing to him and raising her hand threateningly.*) Here you defy me, boy! I will be just to you. You have never given me an unkind word, but now you concentrate a whole life of loyalty in one single act of defiance. (*Goes to table and seats herself. Vincent rises and goes toward her, and as he speaks, places one hand on the back of her chair. During his speech she leans her elbow on table and her chin on her hand.*)

*Charles.—*Mother, you accuse me unjustly! As God is my helper, I would not marry Abigail Springer, should she, on her knees ask me to, and back it up with two pages of pedigree in the Herald's college and a wagon, loaded with gold.

Alice Vin. (Looking up quickly and angrily). No, you prefer a low, base-born girl, with a pretty face. (*Resumes former position.*)

*Charles V.—*Let me finish, mother. I have never contradicted you yet, nor will I now, but let me describe a love match to you. The woman may not be equal to the man, but what man ever draws an equation, with a pair of soft, white arms around his neck, a warm kiss from sweet lips, and a love light in beautiful soft eyes, beaming only for him. The man may be inferior to the woman in certain instances he is. She only covers his shortcomings with a beautiful, bright-colored robe of loving charity. She hid the darkness of the cross on Calvary. Are the people unhappy? (*Leaves chair and advances*)

stage partly facing his mother.) Ask those who go without necessities? They will tell you, no! Love gilds a cottage, where hate or indifference make hideous the gilded Griffins upon the walls of the palace. (*Changing his tone to one of pleasantry.*) But mother, I have news for you! and no doubt but that it will be good news. I will give up Lulu, since you demand it, but I will not marry your aristocratic Griffin. I am going away to try my fortune. Have received a letter offering me a fine opening, and while I am gone, I shall travel awhile. Does this meet with favor from you?

Alice V.—(*Sarcastically.*) Distasteful to me? How kind in you to ask. No, it is not. (*Louder.*) No! you may go and try your fortune. Perhaps when you try the world awhile you will be better satisfied at home.

Vincent.—(*Coldly.*) Madame, I will not longer trespass on your hospitality. As you say I will go and try the world. Allow me to bid you adieu. (*Raises her hand to his lips and then exits through door. He turns and looks towards Alice Vincent as if he would come back, but she not noticing him, he disappears.*)

Alice V.—(*Seating herself at table and leaning her elbow on table she clasps her hands.*) He is gone, and I have been unkind and perhaps unjust to him, but I cannot love him as I should. His father was untrue to me—I was true to him. He was a faithless husband—with one woman named Taylor that I know of. I was a faithful wife Oh! in the annals of domestic history, how many records like this could be written? I knew of my desolation before my boy was born, and on my knees—before my Heavenly father—I prayed that his whole life might be accursed for his father's sake, and that I might die in giving him birth. His father is dead, but curses, like lightning, fly on the wings of space. My prayer was, that I might die and the father live, grow up and disgrace him the same that my husband did for me. (*Slowly rising she paces the stage near front from L to R.*) I was a happy woman, until my husband met this Mrs. Taylor. I am not handsome, I know, but I was true. I do not know that I hated *her*, for an innocent woman is at a terrible disadvantage in the hands of a scoundrel whose business is seduction, unless she is of that type of womanhood that shines with a direct glory. His plans were well laid and she fell, and after that, all the attention I received from him, was simply because I belonged to the animal kingdom.

SCENE CLOSES.

SCENE 2—*A street in Detroit. Enter from R. Vincent followed by Pat Flavan carrying a valise.*

Pat—(*Looking at the scene*). Horray! Here is the first station! Woodward Avenue Depot! Across the river and away over Canadaya to New York and Newburgh.

Vincent.—Yes, this is the first station, Pat, Woodward Avenue. How often will I think of it, when I am away. Its beautiful surroundings and everything connected with it. But Pat! you can wait here awhile, while I replenish my cigar case, or rather you can meet me at the Central depot. (*Exit at left*).

Pat—Yes, I'll meet him at the *depot*, or the *day po*, or the *de-po*, just as he likes. Its strange that, payple don't call it *station*, and thin they would all say it alike. Over in old Ireland, they all say station. So when a man starts to travel everybody knows he's going on a journey. God bless old Ireland! Its a daisy of a country and I'm proud to say that I'm an Irish lad. Whin I makes a mistake, everybody laughs and says, Oh! that's all right! he's Irish.—(*Sings.*)

SONG.

It's Irish I am and I want you to know,
I'm Irish all over and not very slow.
I'm proud of old Ireland, the home of my sires,
I'm proud of her altars, though dimmed are their fires.

(*Spoken*) I have a kind master,
I'm Irish you know;
I'll never desert him,
(*Spoken*) I'm Irish, 'tis so,

I'm Irish all over, a brave Irishman,
I'll have all the fun and the mischief I can,
I belong to the red-headed Irish from Cork;
I'll be as much Irish when I reach New York.
And none shall abuse me, for lick him I can;
I'm Irish, from Ireland, a full Irishman.

Now that song expresses my sentiment in Irish. If you call a man an Englishman, it is no name to call him at all. If you call him an American, he takes it like so much taffy. If you call him a Frenchman, he grins, and if you call him a Dutchman, he is so pleased that he goes and drinks another glass of lager, but call him an Irishman and he wants to fight. I'll not be so. Whin they call me Irish, I'll take off my hat and say: "Thank your honor for the compliment." But I must go, or the depot will be gone to New York. [*Exits.*]

SCENE III.—*Major Robert Taylor's Parlor at Newburg. As scene changes Major Taylor and Nellie Gordon are discovered. Nellie is sitting in a chair near center of stage, over which Taylor is bending.*

Taylor—As you say, cousin Nellie, he is rather prepossessing, and if you will pardon a compliment *per se*, I will say that *you* are not bad looking. So the path will be easy for you to accomplish my purpose.

Nellie (looking up at Taylor).—Tell me, Robert, exactly what you want me to do.

Taylor (sitting down on lounge).—I want you to do this, Nellie. Weave a web around this man Vincent until you have him in love with you, and consequently under your control. Hold your power with a high hand, so that you can use him as I say.

Nellie.—How in the world *came* you to pick up this acquaintance and friend?

Taylor.—Why, you remember the large political meeting held here a few weeks ago? Well, while I was standing there listening to the speeches, I noticed a tall, finely formed man in the crowd who seemed to be a stranger. Chance threw us together, and chance started a conversation. I found out that his name was Vincent, and that he was thinking of settling in New York. After the speech we went to a restaurant for a bite of supper, and over a bottle of wine he told me of some troubles, and that he was a knight-errant on the highway of life. He also showed me letters of introduction from those whom I knew, having become acquainted with them while I was stationed in Detroit, in fifty-seven. Well, one thing led to another, and I finally asked him to stay with me and try army life for a while, to which he consented. He suits me exactly. He is quick and capable, and every day I like him better. Now you have the story of our acquaintainship.

Nellie.—It is strange that you should make this friend in this way. His name alone is not a good omen. A man named Vincent was the cause of a great many heart-aches to all of us, and this man looks like him. Supposing that he should be a son or relative of him who once caused so much trouble. Such things have happened, and should this be so, this man may prove to be a source of further evil to you.

Taylor.—Never fear that. There were no sons in that family that I ever heard of. (*Suddenly.*) Nellie, I am in trouble and you must help me out. I wish to use this man as a tool, not to have him use me, and you, sweet coz., can aid me. Only do as I suggest and all will be well, with

prosperity in store for me, and when I am prosperous you shall be taken care of.

Nellie.—But how about Grace, Robert? You must know that when she becomes your wife that no roof that shelters her can be over my head.

Taylor.—Oh, pshaw! never mind Grace.

Nellie.—But I *do* mind her. She will be your wife and will look with a jealous eye at our peculiar relations. Of course I am your housekeeper and your cousin, but *she* will then be your housekeeper and cousinship will be confined strictly to that relationship. She will be delighted at an occasional short visit (*laughing*). She will not leave us together much, Robert. She will be a very devoted hostess and will never leave me. (*Laughs.*)

Taylor (as if nettled).—Pshaw! Grace Montfort is not my wife yet, and when she is, I will say what shall, and what shall not be done. If I say I wish you to stay, you shall stay. (*Confidentially.*) Nellie, what if I should not marry Grace at all?

Nellie (laughing).—Oh, Robert, you are one of the most fickle of men. Not marry Grace? You do not dare to say so to her.

Taylor (scowling). Yes, I do dare; and should I wish to, you may have the privilege of hearing me say it. But she is coming here to-night, and so is Vincent. I asked him over to have a game of cards. Come to think of it, I must away to my toilet. (*Rises.*) Alas! poor men, they must always be fixing themselves up, while as for the dear delightful women they always look like angels. (*As he says the last he walks behind Nellie's chair, and as he concludes he pulls her head backwards by putting his hands under her chin and kisses her. Then exits through door in L.*)

Nellie (looking after him).—Well, Mr. Impudence, good bye; that is, if you have gone. I will try and do the bidding, if it will help out my bonnie cousin. (*Takes a coquettish position on lounge, changing position of hands and patting and seemingly arranging her hair.*) Let us see, I must look pre-occupied. (*Slowly.*) How does a lady look when she is pre-occupied. (*Rests her chin on her hands.*) This is the way. So now I am ready for Sir Charles the Vincent of Vincentville, town of Vincentburg, county Vincentminster. (*A bell is heard.*) Oh, there he is! my fate, my fate, my life, my love. (*Takes a book from table and pretends to read.*)

(*Enter from flat Vincent, who seeing Nellie advances smiling. Nellie rises and holds out her hand which he takes.*)

Nellie.—Good evening, Mr. Vincent. This is indeed a pleasure. Take this seat, please. (*Hands him a chair on which he sits down, and seats herself near him.*) You have made yourself quite a stranger since your stay in Newburgh.

Vincent.—I have only to apologize by saying that nothing but duty would have made me have missed so much pleasure as your society.

Nellie (coquettishly).—A flatterer, Mr. Vincent. With your splendid *physique*, I would not have thought it of you.

Vincent.—A reproof so gilded with a compliment, that I thank you for it.

Nellie.—How a reproof?

Vincent.—By the insinuation that a perfect manhood, and admiration of the fair sex are incompatible.

Nellie (coldly).—Where then the compliment, if I may be so bold as to ask?

Vincent.—The splendid *physique*. You know, I suppose that men are inordinately vain.

Nellie.—I did not. (*Slowly*). I have always supposed where so much perfection existed, that the consciousness of its possession, excluded vanity, especially when those who might be disposed to attack this impregnable fortress are so weak.

Vincent (aside).—I have nettled her a little, but by Jove she is not bad looking. (*Aloud*). Miss Gordon do not crush me with sarcasm. I will make an apology broad enough to cover all my offendings.

Nellie (smiling). I will accept the apology made so handsomely, and in granting forgiveness will add that I do not think you very much of a sinner. But seriously speaking, Captain Vincent, I have become somewhat interested in you, and should you not think it impertinent, I should like to know something of your past life.

Vincent (carelessly and waving his hand). Oh, I suppose that I am a black sheep. My mother is a very peculiar woman, and although she is wealthy and I am her heir, here I am, out in the world, making my own living and not asking her for a copper cent.

Nellie (earnestly).—Was she unkind to you?

Vincent (laughing).—No—but if she had been, your genuine interest in me would repay me for a great many acts of unkindness from *ma mere*.

Nellie (confusedly).—Excuse me. I did not mean to be bold.

Vincent.—Not bold, I never would think that (*Sighing*). Women create an equipoise in this world. If one breaks

a man's heart, some other daughter of Eve, will become both his champion and comforter. (*Earnestly.*) But Miss Gordon I am sincerely obliged to you for your interest in me and I assure you that I shall endeavor to deserve it.— (*Bell rings, Nellie rises.*)

Nellie—There comes the rest of the company, Miss Monfort, I must go and receive her. I will not be absent long, and for a short while I will crave your indulgence.

Vincent.—*Walking with her to door in flat.*—Certainly, but make your absence as short as possible. (*Exit Nellie through door in flat. Vincent walks towards front of stage, rubbing his hands.*)

Vincent.—Why not? A trim little figure, pleasant face, ordinarily accomplished no doubt, and a good housekeeper. Why not? She on one side of a fire place, looking very prettily, I on the other side. She at the head of my table presiding with womanly grace. Why not? (*Takes seat and leans arm on table.*) It is strange what a sense of superiority, the possession of a woman gives a man. After all it is strength playing with weakness; but the weakness is only physical, for in moral force they are stronger than any man. But how beautiful and enchanting they are. A taper waist, fair features, laughing eyes, a tempting mouth, pink ears, white, pearly teeth, delicate hands—but I will have to stop or people will think I am giving the pointers on a blooded horse. (*Enters from door in flat unobserved Grace Monfort, Nellie Gordon and Major Taylor.*) But if I have bad luck with Venus, I am sure of Mammon for I will have my mother's thousands.

Major Taylor—Ahem! (*Vincent starts and looks around discovering the trio. He appears confused, Taylor laughs.*) Allow me Captain to break into your romantic reverie. You are acquainted with my cousin Miss Gordon. (*Crosses over and takes Miss Monfort's hand and leads her up to Vincent.*) I will now make your life additionally happy by introducing to you, my very dear friend, Miss Monfort.

Vincent—(*taking Grace's hand in his, and holding it.*) It gives me great pleasure to meet with my dear friends. I hope Miss Monfort that you will inscribe my name among those entitled to your kind thoughts.

Grace Monfort—(*withdrawing her hand.*)—I most certainly shall Captain Vincent, for a previous predilection based on say-so from Major Taylor is only confirmed by a personal view.

Vincent (aside).—Bless me, but I must be a regular masher.

(During the foregoing, Nellie Gordon has been busy fixing the table and placing cards thereon. Major Taylor helps her to move the table to centre and towards front of stage. Vincent and Alice turn towards table and Vincent walks to back of stage and brings chair to table).

Alice (aside).—His mother's thousands and he the heir. Unloved by Major Taylor, I will try my hand on the heir to his mother's thousands.

Taylor.—Come Grace, don't indulge in a brown study now. Here Nellie, I will assign you as Vincent's partner while Grace and I will try and beat you.

Alice—I believe in every one for themselves. Let us play Pedro, and then each one is independent.

Taylor—Agreed. (They seat themselves, Alice next to Vincent and Nellie opposite, and Taylor throws round for the deal.) You have the deal, sweet Grace. Now give me a good hand. (Alice deals.)

Vincent (looking at his hand).—I'll give two.

Taylor—Three!

Nellie—Five!

Alice—Save your hearts.

Vincent—How can we, with two charmers, to make your warning an impossibility.

Taylor (laughing as they discard, calls their cards and Alice deals them).—Look here Vincent, are you going to demolish me with your compliments in the house of my fathers?

Vincent (playing).—You surprise me. (Enter Mary Donovan with tray on which is champagne and cake.)

Taylor—Let us stop and worship at the shrine of Bacchus! (Takes bottle and fills glasses, while Mary hands round the cake.)

Grace (taking glass and looking steadily at Taylor).—This is champagne. It is intoxicating. Do you wish me to drink it, Robert?

Taylor—Of course I do. Such nonsense. Champagne is drank in the most fashionable society and on all occasions.

Grace—Then of course, you are willing that I should drink it. I tell you that it is intoxicating. You say that it is the custom in fashionable society to drink it. As I understand you, we must sacrifice our conviction to the usages of society.

Taylor (haughtily).—Yes, that is it. Ladies, my kindest regards. (They all drink.)

(During this time they have been playing, and as the conversation ends the deal is out.)

Grace (counting her hand). Pedro five, game six, Jack seven, low eight. Count me eight Captain Vincent, if you please.

Vincent—(takes out paper and marks.)

Vincent (as he takes the cards and shuffles them). Nothing gives me more pleasure, Miss Montfort than to record a victory for you. *(Taylor picks up bottle and fills glasses, then hands them around.)*

*Alice (looking at Taylor)—*Robert, is it your wish that I take more of this?

*Taylor—*Certainly, or I would not have offered it to you. *(They all drink.) (Vincent is dealing).*

*Taylor—*Five.

*Nellie—*I pass.

*Alice—*Six.

*Vincent (laughing)—*I'll pass. You must wish to undermine the Major.

(Vincent deals out cards after discard. They play.)

*Taylor.—*Mary, go and bring another bottle of champagne.

*Grace (reproachfully).—*Robert, do we need any more?

*Taylor—*Yes; what we have taken is but an appetizer. Go. *(Exit Mary.)*

*Grace.—*Pedro, five; jack, six; game, seven; low, eight. Captain Vincent, will you write down my victory?

*Vincent.—*Certainly. Here, Major, are the cards. *(Hands them to Major Taylor who deals. While he is dealing enter Mary with another bottle of champagne, which Major Taylor pours out, filling glasses and he drinks.)*

Taylor (as he deals, showing the signs of intoxication.)—Vincent can you not give us your heroic on the "Glorious Vintage of champagne?"

*Nellie—*Had you not better deal the cards, Robert?

*Taylor—*We can do both, I will deal the cards, and Vincent can sing. So here goes. *(Deals—Music—Glorious Vintage of champagne—Satanella Balfe. At the conclusion of the song, the players take up their hands.)*

*Nellie (looking spitefully at Alice)—*Seven.

*Grace—*Eight.

*Vincent—*I'll pass.

*Grace—*Delightful man. Always considerate.

*Taylor (moodily)—*I'll pass.

(Taylor deals cards around after discard. They play.)

*Grace—*Pedro, five; low?

*Nellie—*I have low.

*Grace—*Jack?

Taylor (savagely.) I have Jack.

*Grace—*High.

Vincent—Allow me to contribute my high to your general result.

Grace (hesitatingly.)—I guess I am eight on the other side. (*Earnestly*). Captain Vincent I had rather have you mark my failure than any one else.

Taylor (savagely.) May I ask why? Mary some champagne. (*Mary hands champagne, which Vincent drinks and the rest take cake.*)

Taylor (aside). See how Nellie stands it. She is seasoned.

Nellie (to Grace spitefully). You can now see Miss Monfort, that diamonds representing wealth does not always triumph over hearts, and you know what they represent.

Grace (while Nellie is dealing). But diamonds and hearts make a pretty good combination, don't they, Captain Vincent?

Vincent—Always, my dear lady.

Taylor (to Vincent)—Could you not have said, Miss Monfort, instead of my dear lady.

Grace (haughtily). I prefer the latter appellation.

Taylor—Pardon me, for my suggestion. Mary, serve the wine. (*He drinks.*)

Grace (picking up her cards)—Three.

Vincent—I'll be gallant and pass.

Taylor—Eight.

Grace (laughing.)—Oh, eight or fate.

Taylor—Yes, madame; that is what I mean.

Grace—If you are that positive now, what will you be when you are married.

Taylor—I will be more positive, madame!

Grace—Madame?—Captain Vincent, you would make a delightful husband, you are always so polite.

Vincent—I would cheerfully serve in that capacity.

Nellie (spitefully)—That is, I suppose if you were asked to. Sometimes gentlemen do things for an accommodation, through gallantry, that common sense would dictate to them to object to and refuse compliance with.

(*During this they play.*)

Taylor (counting his hand)—Pedro, five; high, six; low, seven; game, eight—side, Pedro, five, thirteen. It seems as if assertion wins.

Vincent (earnestly)—Not in the end, Major. (*Nellie takes the cards and deals.*)

Taylor—Yes, in the end Mary bring some of the Burgundy. (*Exit Mary. They take up their cards.*)

Grace—(*looking at her hand*). Ten. I will try assertion awhile.

Vincent—I am a gentle-man, so I'll pass.

Taylor—Gallantry and safety will keep me quiet. (*Enter Mary with tray on which are two bottles*). Taylor drinks and the rest touch their glasses and set them down.]

Nellie (*moodily*). I will pass. I had rather try treachery than assertion. It is safer. [*The cards are dealt. They all play.*] [*During the play, Taylor makes another sign to Mary who advances with the tray. Taylor pours out a glass for himself.*]

Taylor [*huskily*]. A toast to my fiancée Miss Monfort, who bets on assertion.

Grace—Excuse me sir. If in your own house I am subjected to insult, I am fortunate in having a gentleman present, who I know will protect me. Captain Vincent, can I ask you to escort me home?

Vincent—Most certainly, Miss Monfort, [*rising*.]

Taylor [*rising*].—I may have something to say about this.

Vincent [*laying his hand on Taylor's shoulder*). No Major, you will not have a word to say about this. I am responsible for what I say and do, and to-morrow I will explain all to you, when you are more reasonable, [*drawing himself up*.] To-night, Miss Monfort has asked me to escort her home. I may not get through, but I am going to start, and I would not advise any one to stand in my path.

[*Grace exits through door in flat, but soon reappears with her wraps on*.]

Grace—Good night, Nellie! Good night, Robert! I hope in the morning, that you will be in better spirits. Captain Vincent, I am ready. [*Exit Vincent and Alice*.]

Taylor—Well, Nellie, what do you think of that?

Nellie—(*scornfully*). I think that you have tried to make a fool of yourself and that you have succeeded most admirably, (*yawning*) but I believe I will go to bed. Do you want Mary any more? She is about half asleep.

Taylor—(*savagely*). You can go to your room. When I am through with Mary I will let her know [*Exit Nellie through door in left smiling superciliously*.] Mary, bring me a bottle of brandy!

Mary—(*standing as if asleep*.) Sir!

Taylor—A bottle of brandy. Do you hear? [*Exit Mary. Taylor seats himself by table*]. Strange dreams come over me to-night. [*Looks at bottle on table*.] Ha! a little Burgundy. [*Drinks*.] A child's face! [*Enters Mary with brandy, which she sets on table*]. You can go to bed now, Mary.

Mary—Thank you sir. [*Exits*.]

Taylor—(*drinks from brandy bottle*) Champagne, Burgundy and Brandy. An exhilarating compound, but not half so exciting as a dead child's face. My God! can I never outlive this, or must my punishment come in a forced marriage to a little doll-faced girl whom I do not love. Grace would make me a good wife. She would read the old Testament through the first six months of the year, and the balance of the year would be devoted to the new Testament. She is good. But I had rather have Nellie with her wickedness and brains, than the other with her goodness and nothing else. But the dead child—(*drinks*) this will drown her memory. *Little* Nellie, with her seventy-five thousand dollars. My sweet little neice left to my care and Guardianship. (*Walks up and down stage wringing his hands.*) Gambling and fast life did me up. I was unlucky with cards and lucky with women. Both being very expensive. I did not mean to use her money; I first took some of it to replace some government funds I had used. I lost that, and took more, and finally most of it went. (*Goes to table, sits down.*) Oh, little Nellie, you come back to me to-night with your sweet face, as you used to sit upon my knee to tell Uncle Robert how much you loved him. (*Rises and faces the stage*) The money went and the day of settlement approached, when I had to show my accounts, (*slowly and in subdued voice*). In case of Nellie's death, I was her heir. Fear drove me to a crime. There are drugs that poison slowly, and to save myself, I gave them to her, while she would look up into my face with her dancing eyes, and thank me for the nice lemonade. (*Faces the audience at center and places his hands on his head.* Oh, my God! when I think of it, it turns all the glories of a hope in heaven into the despair of a remorseless hell. She died! (*laughs hysterically*) and no one knows how, but myself. (*Walks across the stage backward and forwards hanging his head, with his hands locked behind him.*) The money was all gone and I was her heir. I had to do it or perish myself. I am not a bad man—only a weak one. The world is full of such men. With all the intentions of heaven in their hearts, the result of all their efforts is an apotheosis of hell. I wonder if, at the last day, our great Judge will take this into consideration. Knowing what we meant to do—knowing what our heart beats were—knowing how weak we were, will he judge us by our intentions or the result? (*Goes to the table and pours out liquor.*) But a truce to this (*Drinks.*) I am again in arrears, and I am going to use this Vincent to help me out. (*Laughs.*) To-morrow I shall apologize to my dear Grace and of course be forgiven. I shall ex-

plain to Vincent and use him. (*Suddenly*). Why can't I marry Grace to him and then have Nellie Gordon to myself. I'll do it. After all it is a contest between desperation backed by brains and an unsuspecting dupe, (*laughs as he pours out liquor*). I wonder how many bottles of liquor I've drank to-night, but I'm steady. Here's to brains—they always win they're better than money, position or anything else. Here's to brains.

[*Curtain.*]

END OF ACT IST.

ACT II.

SCENE I—*Sitting room in Taylor's House—To back of stage two single doors l and r of center. The left door is open—To right a bay window with lace curtains divans, table, escritoire, etc.*

[*Enters from left door in flat Nellie Gordon.*]

Nellie—Poor Robert, I fear his hours are numbered, as the doctor seems to think there is no hope. Fate seems against me. (*Sits on divan to l.*) With his death will end my living here, and I have lost Captain Vincent who is thoroughly infatuated with Grace Monfort. I lost my chance when Vincent was so sick. Grace went to take care of him and won his heart, when really at the time he liked me better than he did her. But now the great big baby loves her because he is grateful to her. (*Shrugs her shoulders*). Robert took it easily. He gave Grace up without a word, and just as I was building fairy castles of a future supremacy here, I am threatened with ruin by Robert's death. (*Rises and walks to table.*) Everything is Charles Vincent now. If Robert wants anything he calls for Vincent. (*Sits down at table.*) If there is a lawn party in town Captain Vincent is the hero; if a select dinner, Vincent is the honored guest. If anything grand is to be done they have Vincent do it. Grace loves him, (*spitefully*) or pretends to, and he is the hero of the hour.

[*A bell is heard from left door in flat*]*—Rising.*

There is Robert ringing his bell (*Louder.*) I'm coming. (*Exit through door, reappearing again*). He wants Vincent of course. (*Goes to bay window and looks out.*) There he is in the garden making love to Grace. (*Opens window and calls*) Captain Vincent? Robert wants you. (*Shuts window.*) He is coming, here he is.

[*Vincent enters through R door.*]

Vin.—Did you say Major Taylor wanted me?

Nellie—Yes, and while you are with him I will take a

little air [*Exits through R door as Vincent exits through Taylor's room, shutting door.*]

[*Enter Mary Donovan from left wing with duster in her hand. She begins to tidy up the room and dust the furniture.*]

Mary—Well, well, well, if this house isn't turned up topsy turvey. The master has got the influmatics, the Captain has taken his girl, and Miss Nellie has got the dumps for all its worth. If the master dies, Miss Nellie's cake is baked. Then the Captain will marry Miss Grace and like as not settle right in here. Then there is Pat. He's the most impudentest fellow I ever see. He had'n't been acquainted with me for three days before one day he came in and says he: "How do you do? where's your hat rack?" and says I, just in fun, "I'm hat rack enough for you." Then he put his hat on my head and says he: "You're just a regular old mahogany," and he kissed me. I got mad and says he, "You mus'nt get mad for we're relations," says I, "we're not," and says he, "Why not? You're working now for Major Taylor and I am working for Captain Vincent." "What has that to do with it." says I, and says he, "don't they work together?" Yes says I. Then says he, "don't they have a relative duty?" Yes, says I, taking Pat's hat off my head and holding it in my hand. "Then" says he, "ain't they related as far as duty is concerned?" "I guess so," says I, "then ain't our interests identical?" says he "bein as you work for one and I for the other" says he, "and of course were related, and among relations there's no harm in kissing among the sexes," and with that he kissed me again, before I could help myself.

(*Pat opens door in R and sticks his head in.*)—

Pat—Is their any company, Mary?

Mary—(*saucily*). No! there ain't any company, mister Pat, and there's none wanted.

Pat—(*entering the room.*) None wanted? That's a nice spache to drop from two such rosy lips and pearly taath, besides that I'm not company. Come here Mary, by this bay windy, and I'll whisper something into your left ear, that will make you feel as if you were swimming in a river of Ice Cream flavored with vanilla.

Mary—Be off with you Pat with your blarney. (*Pat goes to bay window and Mary as she talks, gradually approaches to him.*) What would I want to be swiming in ice cream when it costs twenty-five cents a quart? It would be pure extravagance. What do you want, anyway, Pat? (*By this time she is standing beside him.*)

Pat—Mary did ye's ever study ana-to-my?

Mary—No! What for do you ask that question?

Pat—Stand there and I'll answer yes. (*He takes Mary's hand and pulls her over near him.*) Now look at me arrum. Dye see it?

Mary—Yes, I see it; its big enough.

Pat—(*holding his arm out straight.*) Dye see how straight me arrum is? Now whist: (*Bends it gradually towards Mary's waist until as he stops speaking it is around it.*) Now I'll draw up the confabulation of the right periodical, and that slaps the polar equinox right in the face. Old Pole gets mad and contracts. So mad, that it effects the whole arrum until it bends and bends, until it stops, and then it is supported by your phalanx. That is ana-to-my.

Mary—(*pushing him away.*) Go way with you ana-to-my and big words. You had your arm around my waist.

Pat—Why not?

Mary—(*mimicking him.*) Why not. Because, why not, and not why.

Pat—And is that the reason. *Mary* (*coaxingly*) come closer to me and let me whisper to you.

Mary—I'll not. (*Pat takes her hand and with his back to the window he pulls her towards him. She resists, and he pulls all the harder. Mary suddenly leans towards him when Pat loses his balance and falls out the window.*)

Mary—There goes your ana to-my now, and you can just pick it up. (*Dusts around the room and goes to window.*) *Pat* has fallen into the tub of rain water—now he is picking himself up—go way with you, kissing your hand to me. [*Bell rings*]. There is Miss Nellie's bell, so I must go. [*Exits.*]

[*Enters from Taylor's room, Vincent, in an excited manner holding a manuscript in his hand.*]

Vincent—(*walking to Divan near R F.*) Here is a horrible tale. (*Seats himself.*) I will read this over again to be certain of it. *Taylor* has broken down at last, and here is his confession. (*Unfolds manuscript and reads aloud.*)

“DYING CONFESSION OF ROBERT TAYLOR!”

Believing that I am about to die, I dare not leave the world with my lips sealed, as to a dreadful secret connected with my past life, which I now confess, placing the same in writing and confiding it to my friend, Captain Charles Vincent, to be used only after my death.

My sister Julia married a gentleman by the name of Armitage, who, after marriage accumulated considerable wealth. A daughter was born to them, and for awhile everything went well and happily. After awhile all this

changed. First Armitage sickened and died, leaving his widow and fatherless daughter in my charge, as their natural protector. God knows that I at least tried to do this duty faithfully. My sister and I gathered up what he had, and by judicious handling, it footed up about eighty thousand dollars, of which at Julia's request, I invested seventy-five thousand dollars in interest bearing securities. Most of women would have been resigned if not happy, under these circumstances, but every fresh development of the affairs of Armitage seemed to add to her grief. He had made her his executrix, without bonds, and left everything to her, either for herself or their child. This confidence in her seemed to draw her closer to him, even in death. She never recovered from it. Every dollar she used in maintaining herself and child, seemed to her a messenger of loving care and foresight from her dead husband. Five thousand dollars went to pay doctors and for traveling and other expenses, to save her from the grave, but all in vain. In spite of all that I could do; in spite of all that kind skillful physicians could do, she sickened and died. Her only thought seeming to be a heartsick desire to go to her husband. I believe that at this time I was a good man. Her very trust in me awoke a corresponding degree of faithfulness on my part, and she told me on her dying bed, that one thing that consoled her, was that she felt that next to a mother, her own dear brother would be good to her fatherless and soon to be motherless child. After her death, her will was read. In it she left everything to her child, and in case that Nellie should marry, have children, and die, then the property was to be evenly divided among the surviving children. But in case Nellie should die, either before marriage or childless, then the property should all be mine, thus making me the absolute heir in that contingency.

If I had married some true woman at this time, I believe everything would have been well, but I did not. Habits acquired on the frontier, came back to me. I began gambling and lost. I formed the acquaintanceship of dangerous women, whose smiles cost gold. My salary was insufficient to meet expenses and I used some government funds. Fearing detection, for I did not know at what minute an inspector might visit me, I took some of the money belonging to my dead sister's child and replaced the government funds. This started a new idea. I could use this money in my keeping as guardian and executor, and not fear an inspector. I used the most of it, and lost it, year by year, until people began to talk, and an accounting was hinted at. I knew what this meant, and was almost frantic

and to save myself I made the hellish resolve to get rid of little Nellie, and thus become the heir. After that, day by day, I gave her a subtle poison, giving it to her in lemonade, of which she was very fond. She grew thinner and paler and more lovely every day. People noticed it and shook their heads saying, "she is going the same way her parents did." I had always been kind to her and she loved me dearly, and would sit on my knee and drink the poisoned lemonade, laughing at me as she did so, and thanking me for my goodness. At last she was confined to her bed, and after a short time she died, poisoned by me, and blessing me as her best friend. Her death left me with no one but myself to settle with. There is something left which I wish should be paid to the next heirs in New York who are mentioned in my will, and I leave this to my friend Captain Charles Vincent, as well as the arrangements for a support for my cousin Nellie Gordon.

As I have said before, I cannot die with this secret on my mind, and hoping that God may forgive my terrible sin where desperation conquered over all that was good in me, I subscribe to the truth of all the above.

ROBERT TAYLOR.

Vincent—(speaks). He broke entirely down once or twice while dictating this to me, but a dose or two of brandy pulled him through. It is terrible though.

[*Enters through R door Grace Monfort. Vincent rises.*]

Grace—(pouting). You did me nice, Captain Vincent, to leave me out on the lawn all alone all this time.

Vincent—(leading her to a seat). Pardon me Grace, but I could not get away from poor Taylor any sooner. Oh, by the way, here is pen and ink and I would like to have you witness his signature to a business document. It will not be necessary for you to read it as you know his signature.

[*Goes to secretary, opens it. Grace rises and taking pen signs manuscript held folded by Vincent. She then sits on Divan to R. Vincent folds manuscript after signing it, puts it in his pocket and sits down by Grace.*]

*Vincent—*And now my dear Grace let us talk of our future. I love you dearly, and you have been partial enough to say you return it. I can speak of this to you here, without reproaching myself, as Taylor feeling that you and he were not mated, gave you up willingly for your own sake. Will you not set the day now and tell me again that you love me?

*Grace—*You may set the day Captain. (*Captain Vincent takes her hand smiling.*) You foolish boy, what do you

want me to tell you that I love you for, when I am going to marry you. Is not that enough?

Vincent—It seems like a dream, as if I could not be so happy. (*Grace suddenly places her handkerchief to her face*). What is the matter dear Grace, are you faint?

Grace—A fan, please?

[*Vincent rises and hands her a fan which she uses. He stands near her anxiously looking at her.*]

Grace—(*aside*). This is almost too much to bear. I do not love him, and I am going to make a terrible sacrifice. (*aloud*.) I am better now.

Vincent—(*taking chair and sitting down facing Grace*.) Are you better now?

Grace—Yes, it was only a faint feeling, which has gone.

Vincent—I wish to tell you one thing Grace, that hitherto I have kept concealed, as I wished to win you as I was. Now that I have done this, I wish to tell you of our future. My mother is rich and I am her heir. After our marriage, we will visit her, and I know she will love you as a daughter. Your life will be a golden one, and as happy as devotion and wealth can make it.

Grace—I did not need this to make me love you Captain, but of course I cannot be averse to it. I sincerely hope our life may be a happy one. (*Bell rings*.) Go to Major Taylor now and then we will walk home. (*Vincent takes her hand and kisses it*.)

Vincent—You make me so happy.

[*Exits into Taylor's room.*]

Grace—(*rising and crossing stage*.) Oh this is terrible. I am going to marry this man when I love another. When he even touches me with his hand, a cold chill runs through my veins. But revenge is sweet and a woman is an enigma. Robert Taylor whom I love threw me off and to spite him I am going to marry Captain Vincent whom I do not love or even care for. But then, he says he has plenty of gold and that will be a wonderful peacemaker.

SCENE CLOSES.

ACT II.

SCENE II—*Seenes to front. Sitting room in Grace Monfort's House. Doors in flat. Enter Taylor in full dress rubbing his hands and smiling.*

Taylor—Everything goes on prosperously for me. Vincent and Grace are married. Poor Grace! she does not care a fig for Vincent, but she *does* love me. Well, (*shrug-*

ging his shoulders and laughing.) She began the flirtation as a piece of spite work expecting to have me at her feet in short order, but I did not carry out the programme. Owing to the inclemency of the weather I did not appear. But Vincent did, and Grace, poor girl could not retrace her steps. If ever I saw the spider and fly episode re-inacted, it has been done in this instance. Then Nellie she was half way in love with either Vincent or his money and she is now in just the humor to do any devilment towards either of them I want her to, and she is able to do it. Vincent and Grace are going to New York and from there to Detroit on their wedding tour, where I suppose *ma mere* as Vincent calls her, will meet them at the door with her gold in flour sacks to present to them. But Vincent has my confession yet, and by hook or crook I must get it away from him. He says he has it put away so I must wait I suppose until he returns and then I will have that confession. [*Exits to L F.*]

Enter NELLIE GORDON.

Nellie—(*laughing*). Well the climax is reached and Captain Vincent has married that goose Grace, when he might have married me. It is a queer ending of what might have been a happier termination. Grace does not care a snap for Vincent, and married him out of spite and also thinking him rich. *I did* care for him. Grace loves cousin Robert and he does not care for her. (*Slowly*). Now I will have *my* revenge out of this, and serve two purposes. I will wrench that fool's heart out of her, and help Robert. (*Laughs*.) I'll write to Mrs. Vincent, the Captain's mother and tell her anonymously that her son has married a woman who was thrown off by another man. The letter will not stop in New York on its wedding trip, so it will reach Detroit before them. I'll go now, and write it. [*Exit through L door in flat.*]

[*Mary's voice is heard at right wing front.*]

"You needn't coax me any more Pat. Flavan (*enters followed by Pat.*) "The sight of a weddin has turned you crazy. What would I marry you now for?

Pat—Oh, just to be in the style, Mary. Didn't you see how slick everything went off. First the minister, he backed up under the flowers in the corner and looked awful solemn, and then when Mister Charles walked in with Miss Grace, he looked so solemn, and then says he: "Charles Vincent, do you take this woman," &c., &c. Mr. Charles he said "Yes," just as if he would say onnything else. And then the minister he gasses awhile and says he, "Grace do you take this man," and so forth. Misses Grace

she looks down kind of foolish like and she says she will, and then the parson he flings in a lot of guff, and ends up by calling them man and wife, and kisses Miss Grace, and then Mister Charles kisses her, and Miss Nellie kisses her, and Major Taylor kisses her, and Mary if ye'd only the sand in yer back bone to have said yes, while he was in the notion, the parson would have married us for half price.

Mary—Go way wid you Pat. I'm not ready to be married yet, and I'll never do that same thing till I get a good ready on. Law! just see how things will change. When I see Mister Robert standing there, it seemed like one raised from the dead. The doctors said he could never get well, but he did in spite of them.

Pat—Yis, talking about changes, look at Mister Charles. A short time ago Lulu was her name, that is of his girl, now it is Grace. When he gets back now I wonder what Lulu will say.

MUSIC.

Pat—Sings:—

When hearts grow cold, and love is old,
And grieving o'er neglect,
A slighted maiden thus shall say:
What else could I expect.
For men are false and fickle too;
And changing every day,
For some are false and others true,
And what does Lulu say.

Mary—Sings:—

She says that for awhile she cared,
And grieved by day and night,
Until a new one came along,
Whose presence brought the light.
For one man does not make the earth;
Nor one beam make the day,
T'was these same words as she came forth,
That I heard Lulu say.

Pat—You did.

Mary—I did

Both:—

She did not care,
But for an hour or day,
But when a girl is left behind,
Oh! what does Lulu say.

[*Dance and exeunt to left f.*]

SAME AS SCENE 1ST—ACT I.—*Parlor in Alice Vincent's House, in Detroit. Enter Alice Vincent from door in flat.*

Alice—(as she walks down stage). And here is my son and his bride coming home when I did not want them here. If he had only stayed away. (*Takes seat near table*). I might have learned to have loved him while absent, but now that he is coming back, all the old aversion returns to me. (*Slowly*.) I have received a curious anonymous letter, not very complimentary to his wife, but I will judge of her by my own vision. (*Door bell rings*). Ah, there they are! (*Door at side opens enter Charles Vincent and Grace on his arm. Charles leaves Grace and runs to his mother, who receives him cordially. Charles turns to Grace who advances.*

Charles—Mother, my wife. (*Mrs. Vincent advances and kisses Grace, then trembles as if shivering.*)

Alice Vincent—Welcome Grace, as I suppose I may call you now, that you are the wife of my son.

Grace—And I hope to be received by that as your daughter.

Alice—(*coldly*.) It would be of no advantage to you child to be received as a daughter. The daughters of our house have not been happy.

Grace—(*aside*). Her manner chills me. (*Aloud.*) I hope then madam, that I may be a happy exception.

Alice Vincent.—It is to be hoped so. Charles I see your trunks are at the door. You can take your old room, and are enough at home to give the necessary directions. (*Exit Charles*). Sit down Grace. (*They sit on divan*). How long have you known my son?

Grace—About a year, madam.

Alice—A short acquaintance to ripen into a marriage. Your home was at Newburgh, I believe.

Grace—It was, madam.

Alice—And your future plans?

Grace—I do not know. My husband, (*confusedly*) that is your son—you know is in the army. Major Taylor (*Alice Vincent starts as if surprised*) is his superior officer.

Alice—(*rising as if excited*.) Major Taylor, did you say? (*Laughs*). Oh, pardon me, Taylor is a common name, after all. But do you know anything of the history of this Major Taylor. (*Smiles*.) Excuse my interest in him, but you know it is natural; my son being with him.

Grace—(*disconnectedly*.) Well—I can't say. He is an army officer and a Major.

Alice—Do you know anything about his family? his connections? where he is from?

Grace—Not very much, save a few things I have heard. His mother was a very beautiful woman, I have heard, but her name is forbidden in Major Taylor's house. I have never heard the particulars, but there was shame and disgrace connected with her life.

Alice—(*aside.*) The same woman, and my son intimate with her son. (*Aloud.*) You must be tired after your journey, and besides I have been so thoughtless as to keep you with your bonnet on. If you will step this way I will have the servant show you to your room. (*They exeunt through door in side, and Alice Vincent re-enters, walking slowly to front of stage.*)

Alice—This is strange, very strange. Charles in company with that woman's son, for I have no doubt, but that he is *her* son. Out in the world among so many millions of people, for him in his wanderings to fall in with her son. It is very strange. This woman he has brought here, I like her not, but she is my son's wife, and of course one of *my* family. *She* is the messenger of evil to me. (*Laughs hysterically and walks up and down the stage.*) *My* son must meet *her* son, and *my* son's wife must unconsciously tell me of it. Then that letter, telling me that my son's wife is the cast off betrothed of this Taylor. Ah! that name. Another stab at me. (*Sinks in chair.*)

(*Enters Charles through door in side.*) *Charles*—(*Surprised*). Why mother, why do you seem so sad? (*Sits on divan.*)

Alice—Merely a temporary affair, Charles. I felt a trifle faint *suddenly.* Tell me about your wife. Where did you meet her? How long have you known her?

Charles—(*gayly*). Oh, met her at Newburgh, a year ago. She was engaged I think to Major Taylor. I had a spell of fever and she nursed me through it. Love ensued of course, and I was made happy by her promise to marry me.

Alice—Who is this Major Taylor, you speak of?

Charles—An army officer with whom I am serving.

Alice—Did he give up gracefully when, when you took his affianced wife away from him?

Charles—He had too, and then he was taken sick and came near dying.

(*The side door opens and Grace appears, but seeing mother and son in close conference, she stops and listens unseen by them.*)

Alice—Then you feel no misgivings as to your choice?

Pardon me, for this question, but I am naturally anxious about you.

Charles—I feel no misgiving, mother.

Alice—Did you ever mention to Grace that I was rich, and that you were my heir? I ask this question for your sake.

Charles—I do not remember that I stated it in the way you mention.

Alice—Did she not know that you expected to be rich some day? Did you never refer to me, and to my manner of living, or to any incidents of your past life? It would be natural for you to do so.

Charles—Why mother, I suppose that I did, and that Grace may have supposed that you were rich, and she knew I was an only child. Why do you ask?

Alice—Oh, nothing! She of course could love a rich man as well a poor one. How do you like this, Major Taylor?

Charles—Very much. He has been very kind to me.

Alice—Is he a strictly moral man?

Charles—(*confusedly*.) Oh, I suppose he is, the way that men go.

Alice—(*earnestly*.) Is there anything about him at once fascinating and yet repellant?

Charles—(*suddenly*.) You have described him exactly. He has what you might call laughing eyes. (*Alice starts*). What is the matter, mother? You are strangely excited.

Alice—Nothing, only I have not been well lately. I am better now. (*Slowly*.) What would you say if I were to ask you to separate yourself entirely from this new found friend, this Major of yours.

Charles—Why mother, I cannot understand you.

Alice—Whether you can or not, I shall make that demand.

Charles—(*rising and speaking as if expostulating*.) But mother, how can I. He procured me my commission in the army, and I am ordered to report to him for duty.

Alice—You can ask to be changed to some other place.

Charles—But I had rather serve with him, and besides it is Grace's home.

Alice—I cannot help that. If you wish my favor, you must leave that man.

Charles—Do you know him?

Alice—I never saw or heard of him until to-day.

Charles—Then why do you wish me to leave him?

Alice—(*excitedly*.) I do not *wish* it, I *demand* it.

Charles—And I refuse to do so. I had hoped that absence would have softened your dislike to me, and changed

your arbitrary dictation over my actions. You stepped in between me and Lulu, whom I loved, and broke that up. You treated me so that I felt unwelcome in my own home and I left it, and now you seek to break me off from one who has been my friend—a man you say you have never seen or heard of. It is unfair mother. But forgive me for these words, for at least for a few days you can make it pleasant for my bride, if not for me. Let us have pleasanter words. I will go after Grace.

Alice—(rising). No! you need not bring Grace here now, until I have my say. There is a fatality hanging over us that has brought you here to hear words that you would not have heard had you not returned. Your father was untrue to me, and before you were born, I had such a loathing for him that I hated the unborn babe of which he was the father. I prayed that a curse might hang over your life, and that you might disgrace your unworthy father. I have tried since your birth to control that feeling, but I cannot. You need not promise that girl you have married, any of my money, for from this day I disown you. (*Charles sinks on divan covering his face with his hands.*) You shall never see one cent of *my* money. Do you ask why? The woman who ruined my life was named Taylor, and she had laughing eyes, and your Major Taylors' mother's life is shrouded in disgrace. (*Loud.*) She is the woman who stole my husband from me.

Charles—(supplicatingly). Oh, mother! you are mistaken.

*Alice—*And now I will do what I should have done years ago. (*Advancing toward him and raising her right hand.*) You were not born into this world as the offspring of love, but with deceit on one hand and hate on the other. May everything that you touch wither in your hands, may everything that you love, dishonor you, may every friend you have betray you, and above all, may my curse rest on you and about you, for I hate you! I hate you!

(*Exits through door in flat. Charles endeavors to rise, but staggers and falls on the floor in a swoon. Grace steps into room and going up to where Vincent is lying, she pushes him contemptuously with her foot.*)

*Grace—*I never loved you, and only married you for your money! You liar! You told me you were an only son, and would have unbounded wealth. To gain this, I have prostituted myself under the form of law. I will rid myself of you as soon as the law will let me do so. Property and expectations indeed! You have neither. While I am your wife I will not dishonor you, but I will not be your wife a day longer than I can help. Who is Lulu, that you loved

so? you false hound! Do you think that I did not know of your first passion for Nellie Gordon? Liar and traitor! I hate you. When I desert you, as I shall, you can then enjoy the embraces of Nellie Gordon, and not feel that I am in the way.

[*Curtain.*]

END OF ACT II.

[*An Interval of Three Years.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I—*A Western Fort. Interior of Major Taylor's Quarters, representing a log house. To right of stage is a chintz covered lounge. Plain chairs around room. In centre a pine table with pens, ink, hand bell, etc., on it. On wall maps are hung.*

[*Major Taylor discovered at table as if in a brown study.*]

Taylor—Here is my infernal luck again. I went down to Omaha the other day and drew my funds for the next quarter. I tempted the fickle goddess and again she deserted me. What shall I do. The day of accounting has come and I am a lost sheep. (*Slowly.*) Vincent can help me out. (*Rings bell on table.*) Orderly!

(*U. S. Soldier appears at door in flat.*)

Orderly—Did you call, sir?

Taylor—Yes! Give my compliments to Captain Vincent and tell him if he is not too much engaged that I should like to see him.

Orderly—Yes, sir. (*Salutes and exits.*)

Taylor—It is going to be hard work, but I have already told Nellie, that if I fail she must come to the rescue. She has received a letter from Grace that will fix Vincent.

(*Enters Nellie from side.*)

Nellie—Robert, when are these troubles of yours going to end. (*Sits on lounge.*) You no sooner get out of one scrape than you get into another, and as much as I wish to serve you, it is becoming monotonous. Common sense must tell you that detection will come sooner or later; and in the interim, there is all this feverish anxiety. Why do you not stop gambling? You never win, but always lose. (*Suddenly*) How much are you short now?

Taylor—(*despondently*) About two thousand.

Nellie—Well Robert, I will help you out of this, but do

not ask me to any more, and besides I think Captain Vincent has been victimized about enough.

Taylor—(laughing sarcastically). *Ettu Brute. You are smitten with him too, are you?*

Nellie—No, but I am playing a despicable part that I am tired of. Now what is the particular program? You have already given me the general plan.

Taylor—I have sent for Vincent, and am going to get him to help me, by a few entries on his return, that I will make all right after a while. If I succeed in doing this, I will not need you, but if not, I will. When he comes I want you to be in the next room and watch results. Here, I will give you a cue. If I am unsuccessful I will leave the house and say, Oh! Vincent, I am undone, God help me. Wait a moment and then come in. Use every means in your power to gain him over. This will be the last time I will ask you to aid me.

Nellie—(reproachfully). You have said that before Robert.

(A knock at the door. *Nellie rises and runs out of side.*)

Taylor—Come in. (*Vincent enters through door in flat.*) Ah, Captain, I'm glad to see you. (*Rises and advances towards Vincent and shaking hands with him.*) Here! take a pipe and a se'esta on the lounge. (*They fill pipes and light them. Vincent lies on lounge and Taylor takes chair and sits near Vincent.*)

Vincent—The orderly said you wanted to see me. What is it?

Taylor—Well, the truth of the business is that I am in a fix.

Vincent—How so?

Taylor—Well, I bucked the tiger when I was in Omaha and lost, and I want you to help me temporarily.

Vincent—My dear man, I am in no shape to help you. You know that two-thirds of my salary goes to my wi—that is Grace, to support her and our daughter, and it certainly takes the third to support me, and then I have to deprive myself of many things I need.

Taylor—(leaning over towards *Vincent.*) You have government funds on hand, Vincent?

Vincent—(rises to a sitting position.) I know it, but what has that to do with my ability to help you?

Taylor—I want you to let me have two thousand dollars for a while.

Vincent—I hav'nt two thousand cents.

Taylor—You have a good deal more than what I want. It will be only temporary.

Vincent—Taylor, do you mean that you want me to let you have two thousand dollars of government funds?

Taylor—Only for a little while.

Vincent—How can I do it. It is stealing.

Taylor—(*excitedly*). No it is not, Vincent, I will repay you.

Vincent—But how would I escape detection?

Taylor—Buy a few extra horses, and a few thousand feet of lumber.

Vincent—Make false returns? If that is what is needed, why do you not do it?

Taylor—Because I have to pay to disbursing officers, while you buy of the many.

Vincent—(*rising and emptying his pipe*). I will not do this Taylor, for you or any man in existence. I have led an unhappy life it is true, banished by my mother, and deserted by my wife, but I have never yet been a thief.

Taylor—(*rising and laying down his pipe*.) Then all is over with me—and I must perish. (*Louder*.) Oh, Vincent, I am undone, God help me! (*Rushes towards door in flat and exits*.)

Vincent—(*sitting on lounge*.) Poor Taylor is almost crazy. I would like to help him, but I cannot do this.

(*Enter from side, Nellie. She approaches lounge and sits down beside Vincent*).

Nellie—Good morning, Captain.

Vincent—(*half rising*.) Good morning, Miss Gordon.

Nellie—(*looking around as if surprised*). Why! where is Robert? I thought he was here!

Vincent—(*slowly*). He was here, but left a minute ago, like a crazy lunatic.

Nellie—He must be in some trouble. He has acted very strangely the last few weeks. Do you know what it is?

Vincent—(*aside*.) I will tell her. (*Aloud*.) Yes, Miss Gordon, I do. He has been gambling again, and is short in his accounts.

Nellie—What does short in his accounts mean?

Vincent—It means that he has used and lost government money.

Nellie—What does he propose to do?

Vincent—He wants me to help him by doing the same thing. It is more than I am willing to do.

Nellie—Captain, aid Robert, if you can. He is not bad only weak.

Vincent—You seem to be a very devoted friend of Major Taylor's, Miss Gordon.

Nellie—I am his cousin.

Vincent—(haughtily). You seem to take a more than cousinly interest in him, to thus advise me to be dishonest for his sake.

Nellie—(in a low tone.) You are the last man on earth who should accuse me of this. (*Louder and turning to him she lays her hand on his shoulder.*) It is unjust and cruel in you.

Vincent—(as if surprised.) Why Nellie—or excuse me, Miss Gordon, what does this mean? Be frank with me.

Nellie—(clasping her hand over Vincent's shoulder). I will be frank with you, even at the expense of maidenly modesty. When I first met you, I loved you. (*Vincent starts.*) Nay do not be shocked, at the avowal. Robert saw it, and it pleased him very much. You thought something of me then, too, or I was much mistaken. When you were so ill, it was not lack of interest in you that kept me from your side, but a regard to propriety. Another stole you from me and both Robert and myself were unhappy for he loved her and I loved you. You think that I take an interest in my cousin? I do! He has been a good, kind friend to me, a brother, and I can never repay him. (*Rising and walking to chair she leans against it.*) You belonged to me Captain, and we should have married. Do you think that I should have deserted you? No! I would have made you happy. Every day I would have striven to find some new way of pleasing you. I would not have treated you like that traitress, Grace.

Vincent—(rising and walking the stage). There! you have gone far enough. Remember that she is my wife and the mother of my daughter.

Nellie—Oh, you should speak of her kindly. (Takes letter from her pocket and sits in chair.) Listen! *Vincent walks towards front of stage and stands nervously with his hands in his pocket.* I have a letter from Grace that I want to read to you. Do you want to hear it?

Vincent—(hoarsely). Read on.

Nellie—(reading.)

“MY DEAR NELLIE:—

I had never thought that I could bring myself to address you as above, but after so long a time, it seems as if certain events were as a blank, and again I am your happy friend and the affianced wife of the only man I ever loved, Robert Taylor.”

(*Dumb show of intense interest by Vincent during reading of letter.*)

“It may be that I have been somewhat to blame, but nothing compared to the lying scoundrel, (*Vincent starts*

and puts his hand to his head, withdraws it and clasps his hands before him) who plead his wealth, his dear mother's wealth. He did have a certain type of manly beauty, which is reflected in his daughter who looks so much like him that I almost hate her, but his attractions were all external, within he was false as hell itself. Oh, how I hate him."

Vincent—Oh, my God! (*Sinks on lounge and buries his face in his hands.*) Go on!

Nellie—(*continues reading.*) "But the farce is about to end. My lawyer tells me that in a short time I shall receive an absolute divorce and then I shall be free from him I loathe. My only regret will be that I have borne him a child, for she will be a constant reminder of an unhappy episode in my life that I would fain have blotted out. But still I will have some mercy on him. You liked him once and he loved you. He is near you now. Take him to your arms and comfort him. You need have no fear of me as a rival. Kiss him and tell him he is beloved. You can have him, for I hate him.

GRACE (not) VINCENT.

Vincent—Oh that is hard.

Nellie—(*rising and going to lounge, she sits down by Vincent and crosses her hands again on his shoulder.*) It may be humiliating to a woman, but with my love for you I am willing to follow the advice of your unworthy wife. She married you for your money, loving another; without your money she hated you. I loved you, money or no money, for yourself alone.

(*Vincent—(turning towards Nellie, he puts his arm around her and draws her head on his shoulder.*) Oh Nellie! my heart is broken, but in the midst of my desolation, your loving words come like a benediction. I love you simply because in my sorrow you love me. Tell me now what you wish me to do to prove the sincerity of my devotion.

Nellie—Save my cousin Robert.

Vincent—(*drawing away from her.*) That is a crucial test.

Nellie—(*rising and facing Vincent.*) My cousin Robert took me from an unhappy home when I was a child, and spread over my life a rainbow of promise for the future. He has filled in every harmonious color, and made my life complete. Where before I heard quarrelling and discord, from his lips I have heard nothing but peace and happiness. He has his fault I know. If he had not, he would be more than human. Were he more than human, I might worship him, but in my inferiority, I could not plead for

him, for he would not need it. Oh Vincent, if you have any regard for me, save him who has been so good to me. If it were not for him, I would not be what I am.

Vincent—(rising and taking Nellie's hands). Enough! I will do as you say. One more sacrifice will not do me any harm. Your words are very precious, Nellie. Let us seal our new love with a kiss. *(He kisses her.)* Now I must away, and fix my returns, for the pony mail passes here this afternoon. Good-bye, sweetheart. One more kiss. *(Kisses her and exits through door in flat.)*

Nellie—(laughing). Pretty well done, I should say. A little compromising perhaps, but that is no matter now-a-days. How he did bite. *(Slowly.)* Poor fellow. *(Sits on chair near table.)* I pity him, and cannot help liking him after all. That letter did the business.

(Enter Taylor cautiously from R door in flat.)

Hullo! Robert, is that you?

Taylor—(advancing anxiously). Did you succeed, Nellie? Tell me quickly, for this suspense is becoming unendurable.

*Nellie—*He has consented Robert, to aid you before night. I will, I hope have the pleasure of handing you two thousand dollars that you so much need.

*Taylor—*Bless you for that, sweet coz., and I *will* try and take this lesson to heart. But now I must go to Vincent and be near him or he may fail me after all. Good-bye, until we meet again. *(Exit.)*

*Nellie—*After all, this is a detestable farce that is being carried on. I will try a little music to scare away my thoughts and quiet my conscience. *(Exit to R.)*

Enter Vincent.

*Vincent—*I have done it. It did not take long. I only had to buy ten horses at one hundred and fifty dollars apiece, that made fifteen hundred dollars. Then I bought five hundred dollars worth of lumber and that made two thousand. When Taylor pays me back I will sell the horses again and expend the lumber. *(Sits down on divan.)* God help me, here I am a thief, and a forger, for I had to sign the receipt to the voucher.

(Enter Taylor hurriedly.)

*Taylor—*Vincent have you fixed me out? I see the pony mail has come.

*Vincent—*Yes, here is your money. *(Hands him bills.)* My papers are made out and in the mail. *(A knock heard at the door.)*

*Taylor—*Come in.

(Orderly enters through door in flat and hands mail to Taylor.)

Taylor—Hullo! here is a letter for you and one for me from the War Department. (*Hands Vincent letter, who takes it mechanically and opens it. Taylor opens his letter eagerly.*) Here it is, by Jove: My leave of absence for ninety days, with permission to apply for ninety days more and to go beyond the department. What have you got, Vincent?

Vincent—(*carelessly.*) The same kind of a document. But *I* don't care for it now, for I can't turn over my property.

Taylor—You won't have to, or here! we can have a stampede by Indians and lose the horses. And now Vincent, I want you to crown this with one more favor. Give me back my confession?

Vincent—(*rising and speaking angrily.*) Have a care Major Taylor, how far you proceed. The possession of that confession is now my only defence, if you should ever turn upon me.

Taylor—(*coolly.*) I *could* turn upon you now Vincent, and have you arrested before an hour.

Vincent—(*hotly.*) Yes, you could and disgrace me, but it would be the penitentiary for me, and the hangman for you.

Taylor—(*laughing.*) Well, well, let us talk no more about penitentiaries and hangmen. Keep the confession and be doubly armed against me, my good friend. We will not quarrel with a pleasant leave of absence before us.

Vincent—(*moodily.*) Do not talk too much then about penitentiaries. But I am poor company to-day, so if you will excuse me, I'll go to my quarters and mope.

Taylor—All right, come over to-night and have a game of draw?

Vincent—Perhaps so. (*Exits through door in flat.*)

Taylor—Excellent! The pony mail has gone with Vincent's returns and I have the money. So far, so good. (*Calls.*) Nellie!

Nellie—(*outside.*) Coming, cousin Robert. (*Enter Nellie, at R side.*) What is in the wind now? (*Stands near door.*)

Taylor—(*turning towards her.*) Nellie! I have the money, and tried to obtain the confession I gave Vincent when I was so sick, but he demurs. Now I *must* have it. Vincent cannot save himself, but with that confession he can draw me down with him; without it I can laugh at the statements made by a suspected criminal. How can I get it? (*Suddenly.*) Nellie, you know Aw-te-we-zhick, the

Indian. He could be hired to quiet Captain Vincent, and then I could get the confession.

Nellie—No! Robert, no murder if you please. I will get the confession for you during your leave. You and Captain Vincent are going to meet in Michigan, at Kalamazoo, and be together some time. While you are there I will get the confession and perhaps before. That is all that I will do.

Taylor—You must do another thing for me, *Nellie*. I want now to put a flea in the official ear at Washington, so as to have Vincent under surveillance at least. To do this, it must be done by you in person. I don't want him arrested, until I am ready for it. Suspicious circumstances, you know. Send a detective to me and I'll set him to work. You want to say that it is not sure, but as a government officer I have my suspicions and am trying to keep him with me so that he can be watched. If it does not answer my purpose, I need not have him arrested at all. Will you do this for me.

Nellie—(walking up to him.) Robert, as in the past, so in the future, I will do anything you ask me to. (*Sits on divan.*) Now come here and let us plan a little. (*Taylor sits on chair astraddle facing her, leaning on back of chair.*) When do you expect to start.

Taylor—Day after to-morrow.

Nellie—Shall I go with you?

Taylor—Yes, as far as Detroit. There I want you to leave for Washington.

Nellie—I want to go by East Saginaw and see Grace.

Taylor—Very well, then to Washington and you will find me at Kalamazoo on your return. You can write there to me.

Nellie—Is Captain Vincent going at the same time?

Taylor—I hope so. He is going to take Pat, and you can take Mary with you.

Nellie—Has my lord any further commands?

Taylor—No! you can begin to get ready, and I will go and have a talk with my clerks.

Nellie—(arising.) All right! (*Exits through R side.*)

Taylor—Now for business, next for pleasure, and finally safety! (*Exit R door in flat.*)

(*Enter Pat Flavan dressed in uniform.*)

Pat—Where is the Captain, I cannot discover him. But ain't I glad, that we'er going to the States and see civilized people once more. I shall polish up my buttons, cock my hat on sideways and just paralyze the girls, for they won't be able to resist me. And then Mary is going, and that will be the time I will make her just green with jealousy.

It's a nice place, the army and I tell you so for sure.

Sings:—

The army is just a dandy,
 A garden of nicest flowers,
 For flirting and love, and poker to prove
 A solace to lonesome hours;
 The girls can't resist the soldiers,
 They fall down and die right there;
 Until they are raised and petted and praised,
 And told they are very fair.

The army's the place for pleasure,
 With a battle or two thrown in,
 To prove to the world, with banner unfurled,
 We fight with a will to win;
 No wonder the girls all tumble,
 Brass buttons will bring them down,
 But just the same they are not to blame,
 For soldiers just rule the town.

[*Curtain.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I—*Parlors at Hotel at Kalamazoo. Double rooms. The front one with writing table, chairs, lounge, etc. As curtain rises Vincent is discovered sitting at table. As the curtain rises enter Pat from L F with mail, which he hands to Vincent, who opens it without looking at it.* [*Exit Pat.*]

Vincent—(looking at letter.) Ah! here is treachery. It was lucky I opened the letter, for here I am forewarned. (*Reads.*)

“WASHINGTON, D. C.

MY DEAR COUSIN:

I went to the Department last week and hinted at V's defalcation, and undoubtedly ere now you have a detective with you. His name is Dawson. I met him and told him the story, just as you wanted me to tell it. He will be placed under your orders. Will be back in a day or so.

NELLIE.”

(*Speaks.*) So, this is the Mister Dawson. (*Folds his hands.*) Cursed infatuation. Betrayed by her I loved, scorned by him I have served, branded as a villain, stigmatized as a traitor, a price set upon my head! All, all is gone! hope, home, friends, money and my country. Yet I am a man and he who possesses all these, is no more. (*Raising his right hand and looking up.*) Oh God, in heaven!

thou eternal one ! mercy, mercy, and take from me my mother's curse. (*Drops hard on table as if weeping.*)

(*Enter from L C Major Taylor, who observing Vincent's agitation, stops.*)

Taylor—Why Vincent, old boy, what is the matter? Some bad news?

Vincent—(*raising his head and looking steadily at Taylor.*) No! good news. Read that letter. (*Rises and hands letter to Taylor. Taylor starts as he looks at letter.*)

Taylor—(*aside.*) The devil! but I must brass it out. (*Aloud.*) So you have added opening letters addressed to others, to your many accomplishments.

Vincent—No and yes. I did not look at the superscription. There I was wrong, but when I once opened it and got a glance at it, I read it, there I was right, as the contents seem to be entirely devoted to me. Your hand has been pretty well played, Taylor, but you will find me too many for you. I still have your confession.

Taylor—Yes, and if you had given me that confession, this would never have happened. You have brought it on yourself.

Vincent—Brought what on myself? Do you imagine that your scheme will be successful now that it is unmasked. You should be contented, Major Taylor, with what I am and what you have brought me too. My wife has left me, my daughter I cannot see, my mother has cursed me, and driven me from her doors, and in helping you, I have disgraced myself. Have a care, Major Taylor! Have a care! Let whatever happen, I will save myself.

Taylor—I will see you later, when you are more rational. All I want is my confession, and that is the only reason for my course. The detective, Miss Gordon speaks about, I have not seen. When she arrives, she can probably explain. But give me that confession and I will stand between you and all earthly harm. Think over it Vincent, until I return. (*Goes to table and looks over letters, takes up two or three.*) In the meantime I will take my letters, as I see they are addressed to me. (*Exits through rear room and to left.*)

Vincent—There is some treachery going on. Death, before dishonor or prison. (*Calls*) Pat! (*Sits down to table, arises hurriedly and putting hand in vest pocket, pulls out money.*) (*Enter Pat L C.*)

Pat—Did you call, sir?

Vincent—Yes, take this to the nearest drug store and have it filled at once. If any one is here when you return hand it to me quietly. (*Hands paper to Pat who starts.*) Here! (*Pat stops.*) I might want their attention divert-

ed. If I put my fingers in my hair, I want you to try and divert their attention the best you can.

Pat—Yes sir, I'll di-vert it, if I have to do it with a club. (*Exits.*)

(*Enter from rear room Taylor and Dawson, the detective.*)

Taylor—Captain Vincent, my friend Mr. Armstrong. You will find him to be a very pleasant gentleman.

Vincent—(*aside.*) It is Dawson, the detective. (*Aloud.*) Mr. Armstrong I am happy to meet any friend of Major Taylor's. Have a seat. (*They all sit.*) Are you a resident of Kalamazoo?

Dawson—I no, or rather I should say I am a resident of no-where. I have traveled so much in my life, that I am at home almost anywhere. But you are a resident here, I suppose, as I see you are settled for life, judging from your rooms.

Taylor—No! we have merely stopped here for awhile on business and pleasure combined. But Vincent, where is Pat? for now that Mary Donavan has been employed to take care of your daughter Lottie, Pat is our only hold.

Vincent—(*carelessly.*) Oh, Pat is around somewhere. (*calls*) Pat! He is not within call, the scamp. Ah, here he is. (*Enter Pat L C.*)

Pat—Did you call sir!

Vincent—Yes. What was it you wanted, Major?

Taylor—Pat, bring up a bottle of wine, three glasses and some sugar and ice water.

Pat—Yes sir, as soon as I clear the table. (*Goes to table to clear it off and hands package to Vincent unseen by the others. Clears table and exits. Vincent puts package in vest pocket.*)

Dawson—(*to Vincent.*) How do you like army life on the plains, Captain Vincent?

Vincent—Oh, pretty well, although it is fearfully monotonous.

Dawson—Your business out there would not keep you very busy I should judge. You made purchases, I suppose.

Vincent—(*aside.*) This is the detective and he is trying to pump me. (*Aloud.*) Oh yes. I purchased horses, cattle and other supplies of that nature.

Taylor—(*aside.*) I must stop this someway or other. (*Aloud to Dawson.*) Armstrong, come here and look at my sabre. *Armstrong rises and goes to Taylor in back room. They converse together.*

Vincent—(*aside.*) Pat has brought the morphine just in the nick of time.

(Enter Pat with bottle, glasses, etc., on tray. He places them on table and stands by watching Vincent. Taylor and Dawson return to table.)

Taylor—pouring out wine into glasses). This is a very nice wine for native port. We will finish this bottle and then try something stronger.

(Vincent puts his fingers through his hair and Pat rushes to window and looks out. Putting his head back, he says, "There's a man fell dead on the street." Taylor and Dawson run to the window and Pat in pantomime points across the street. Vincent hurriedly puts the morphine in their glasses and takes the other one in his hand.)

Dawson—(as they return.) A fainting fit probably.

(Taylor and Dawson take glasses and all drink).

Dawson—That wine is slightly bitter.

Taylor—I did not find it so. It has a little twang to it. (Pours out some in glass and tastes it.) I don't think it bitter. Perhaps you would like something stronger.

Dawson—No! that will do. I was probably mistaken. How did you find the wine, Captain Vincent?

Vincent—I thought with you, that it was a trifle bitter, but not too much so; just a little taste of the skins. Let us fill again. (Fills glasses by standing between the table and Taylor and Dawson. He puts more powder into their glasses and hands them to them. They all drink).

Taylor—That certainly does taste bitter. Some old sour stuff probably, that they have foisted off on us. Pat, go down and bring up some whisky. (Exit Pat). Armstrong, will you have a cigar or a pipe.

Dawson—I'll take a cigar. (Taylor hands him one which he lights.) Why the cigar is bitter too. (Enter Pat with whisky; he sits it on table.) I believe I'll wash my mouth with a drink of whisky.

Taylor—I'll make a toddy. (He mixes up sugar and water then pours in whisky and hands three glasses around.)

Vincent—I prefer the wine, I think it is just pleasantly bitter. (Pours out glass and drinks it. Dawson eyes him suspiciously. They all smoke.)

Vincent—(aside.) Now for the detective. (Aloud). Oh, Mr. Armstrong, we were talking about horses. Just before I left the West, a man came along with ten as fine horses as you ever saw. It was only a day or so before I left. I bought them all for only one hundred and fifty dollars apiece. You recollect the purchase, Taylor?

Taylor—(in a sleepy way.) Yes—I-guess—I-do. Pat! give-me-some- whisky, I feel devilish sleepy. (Dawson becomes drowsy in his chair and drops his cigar. Pat

picks it up and hands it to him, and then hands glass of whisky to Taylor, who drinks it.)

Vincent—There is some good lumber out in that country too. (*Dawson by this time is asleep. Taylor lets his cigar fall on the floor and in endeavoring to pick it up he falls forward on the floor unconscious. Vincent smokes his cigar and looks at them unconcernedly for a moment, then jumps up.*)

Vincent—Pat, get my overcoat and pack my hand satchel with some underclothes, then meet me near the court house. Be quick, and no questions.

Pat—Yes sir. Shall I put that bottle of whiskey in, too?

Vincent—No. Hurry up. (*Exit Pat. Vincent goes to Dawson and opens his coat and from his inside pocket takes a document, unfolds it and reads it.*)

(*Speaks*). Here it is, the warrant for my arrest. This has been a close call. Taylor has had this drawn ready for the occasion. He would first get me drunk and I would come to myself in jail. (*Puts warrant in his pocket*). I guess I will take this with me: it may do some good. And now while the morphine is doing its work I will leave. (*Picks up Dawson's hat and puts it on*). I guess I will borrow Mr. Dawson's hat. Good bye, my friends, I am sorry I can't stay with you, but like all criminals, I must fly. When you find me, you can arrest me. Good bye, honor, friends and home, henceforth Charles Vincent is an outlaw. (*Rushes out L C.*)

SCENE CHANGES.

SCENE II.—A Street in Kalamazoo.

(*Enter Vincent, followed by Pat, who hands him overcoat and hand satchel.*)

Vincent—And now Pat, I must bid you good bye for a while. I will let you know where to meet me, and will direct the letter to East Saginaw to you. So that if any delay should occur, you must not be uneasy, but keep on asking for a letter, or have it forwarded to you.

Pat—(*earnestly.*) Take me with you Master Charles. I can live on bread and water. Take me, don't leave me!

Vincent—I cannot now, and every moment is precious to me. (*Hands him money.*) Here is a hundred dollars, take it. Don't detain me now, for moments are precious. Good bye until we meet again. Go back at present to Major Taylor. (*Shakes Pat's hand and exits from opposite side.*)

Pat—(crying.) Oh-oh-oh-oh, my poor dear master. I shall never see him again, I know I won't. But I'll spend this hundred dollars in shoes that I'll wear out in walking to find him.

(Enter Grace Vincent.)—(aside). If there is not the lady in the case. *(Aloud.)* This is Mrs. Vincent, I believe. *(Bows and puts his thumbs under his arms, strutting around and looking at Grace.)*

*Grace—*I heard Captain Vincent's voice just now. Where is he?

Pat—(still strutting up and down.) I should not think you would care much where Captain Vincent was, Ma'am, considering that you have shooted him.

Grace—(smiling.) Shooted him? What in the world is that?

*Pat—*Bamboozled him, fired him, dropped him on a hot griddle, sandpapered his head—cleaned him out—let him go to protest and all that. No offense ma'am.

*Grace—*Pat, I like you all the better for taking his part. Oh, Pat, if you know where I can find him, tell me, for I want to get on my knees before him and ask him to forgive me. *(Seizing his wrist.)* Pat! *(aside).* Oh, how shall I ask him? *(Aloud.)* Pat, can-you-tell-me where Miss Nellie is?

*Pat—*She has gone like Master Charles.

Grace—(eagerly). Have they gone together?

Pat—(withdrawing his hand.) How do I know ma'am.

Grace—(wildly.) I will kill him, if he looks on any other woman but me. *(Wringing her hands.)* My feelings towards him have all changed now, and by being jealous of him, I know that I love him. That arch traitress Nellie, has been too cunning for me, but I will yet gain my handsome black-eyed lover, who was so good to me.

*Pat—*He has not gone with Miss Nellie, ma'am for Miss Nellie is in Washington City, and Master Charles has run away from the Major, who is trying to do him some wicked wrong and to put him in jail. He has just left and has told me that he would write to me at East Saginaw where to find him. Miss Nellie is against him too, and has been helping the Major, and they had a police *man* here to take Master Charles away, and then Master Charles, he ran away.

*Grace—*Then Pat, I want you to come to East Saginaw and live with me until you hear from him. Will you?

*Pat—*I must stay here and watch the Major. Then I will come.

*Grace—*Where is the Major?

*Pat—*Where you can't see or find him.

Grace—(*looking off the stage to R.*) I see him now. I will speak to him. There he goes up the street with a satchel in his hand. I will see you again Pat. Wait for me. (*Runs off to R of stage.*)

Pat—Yes, I'll wait for you, at some other place for now I'll go to the hotel and watch the Major and policeman wake up, and see what they say, for I can do the most good for Master Charles in that way. When they come to, they'll be for asking questions, and I'll be there to answer them. I'll tell them how a man came in and hit them and how he threw red pepper in Master Charles' eyes, and how Master Charles ran to a doctor hollering for help and how I ran away from the man, but before I do, I'll clane the sallyratus out of them glasses.

[*Exit through L F.*]

SCENE III—*Reed's Lake. At back of stage the basket of a balloon is seen swinging gently to and fro. In it is the professor. A crowd on stage to witness the ascension. The pavillion is seen to right and the band stand towards left of stage. The lake at back.*

Professor—Now gentlemen, I am about ready to make the ascent, and I believe that one of you is going with me.

Citizen—How far up are you going?

Professor—About a mile or so.

Citizen—Where do you expect to land?

Professor—(*smiling.*) I cannot tell that. There is no danger, however, for I have made many ascensions and as you see, I am still alive and unhurt.

(*Enter Vincent hurriedly still wearing Dawson's hat. He stops and looks at the balloon and aeronaut.*)

Citizen—I was going, but my heart fails me.

Professor—I am sorry, for I had made arrangements, confiding in your promise to accompany me. Is there no one else who will go with me? some one who is not afraid?

Vincent—(*aside.*) Here is my chance for escape. The balloon will land far from here. (*Aloud.*) I will go with you, if some one will exchange coats with me until I return here. I have valuable papers that I do not wish to take.

Citizen—I will exchange with you, as I have been the one to disappoint the crowd. (*They take off coats and exchange.*)

Vincent—Would you let me have your cap in exchange for my hat. It will not blow off as easily.

Citizen—Certainly—(*they exchange.*) Where shall I meet you?

Vincent—I will return here, at pavillion.

Citizen—All right.

(*Vincent enters the basket or car, and turning to audience waves his cap. The professor pulls a string and the basket is drawn slowly up into the flies, being swung slowly from r to l and then disappears in flies. As it begins to ascend band at right plays Spanish Serenade as the basket disappears, police run in from right crying Vincent! stop him! They look around and seeing citizen in Vincent's clothes, they seize him.*)

Citizen—Unhand me! What does this mean?

1st Policeman—(*searches citizen and takes from pocket the warrant of arrest.*) It means this, that Charles Vincent, I arrest you for embezzlement.

Citizen—I guess not. That is not my coat, and my name is not Charles Vincent.

All—No! he exchanged coats with the man who went up in the balloon. We saw him do it.

Policeman—Went up in a balloon!

Citizen—Yes, a stranger offered to go up in my place and I exchanged coats and hats with him.

1st Policeman—How long ago?

Citizen—Not ten minutes.

1st Policeman—Well, you can come with us and explain all this to a justice. Where is the balloon now?

(*Scene opens showing balloon painted away up. Reed's Lake, Band Stand and Club House below. They all look up at it.*)

Citizen—It is beyond your reach, even with a step ladder.

BAND PLAYS.

[*Curtain.*]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An interval of 14 years. A wood in the Rocky Mountains. Flat or curtain in centre grooves. On flat rocks, stunted undergrowth, and in centre the entrance to cave. In front of this set bushes. This scene can be made so in changing it can be drawn from centre displaying a interior of cave at back. On right of flat a mountain road.*

(*Enter from Cave—Vincent as the Mountain Idiot—leaning on staff.*)

Vincent—For fourteen years I have not heard my name spoken by mortal lips. Eighteen years ago to-day my mother cursed me—seventeen years have elapsed since my

daughter was born. These memories are all I have when I am awake, for sleep does not bring to me even a dream of the past. (*Chuckles and rubs his hands.*) But my escape was complete. The balloon descended in the Oscoda pines, and the professor fell out and was killed. I caught a limb and climbed down to the ground and here fate favored me once more. Some unfortunate hunter or land-looker had perished there, and his body I disrobed and changed outer clothes with him. I saw in a paper a few weeks after that, an account of my horrible death, but no identification, as the features were eaten beyond recognition by wild beasts. (*Laughs wildly.*) This ended the chase after me, for Taylor must have heard of my escape in the balloon and of my supposed subsequent fate. (*Places his hand on his bosom.*) But his confession is safe here sewed in oil skin, and some day I will use it. Five years ago my faithful Pat found me out by the slender cue I gave him in my letter. He started with the money I sent him, and kept up the search for me twelve long years, until finally he heard of the mountain idiot, and by a natural psychomancy he both guessed and felt that it must be me. He searched these mountains until he found me. I knew him, (*chuckles*) but he did not know me. Just as he was turning away with a sigh, my heart failed me in my loneliness, and I discovered myself by calling him "Pat." He looked at me astonished, and then drew closer and looked into my eyes. In a moment he was at my feet, his arms about me and kissing my hand, exclaiming, "Oh Master Charles, I knew I should find you. This is the happiest moment of my life. He has been with me since. (*Eagerly and stepping forward on one foot leaning on his staff.*) I am not the only one who has fled to these mountains to escape the law. I have met them and even now I am their leader. (*Laughs.*) A trusty band with a common interest, evasion of the law. But I am tired and here on this green earth, (*lies down*) good, mother earth, I will lie me down and rest me. (*Sleeps.*)

—VISION.—

Scene opens at back and Alice Vincent appears kneeling. She speaks, "Oh God! now that I am dying take back my curse over my poor boys' life. Protect him, wherever he is, and give him a happy future I have provided for him in all things temporal; Oh, Father! provide all things else needful for my persecuted boy. Forgive me for my cruelty, and as I hope for forgiveness myself, take the unjust curse from my son." (SCENE CLOSES.)

(*Vincent starts awakes and rises.*)

Vincent—Oh, what a dream I have had. I dreamed that my mother was dying, and that in dying she prayed to have the curse taken away from my life. Oh, God! if justice is to be done at last, to one who has been so wronged, fulfil my dream, and give me back mine happiness.

(*Enters Pat from cave; he is dressed in rags and patches.*)

Pat—Master Charles, ar'nt yes about ready for your dinner?

Vincent—No, Pat! hunger is a stranger to me, but ere long I will be in, and try and eat something. I have had a strange dream Pat. (*Sits down at foot of tree*). I dreamed that my mother was dying, and she was praying to have her curse removed from me. Oh, if the dream would only come true.

Pat—Why don't you change yourself into a human being again Master Charles, and go back to the States, and see if everything is not clear. Perhaps your mother is dead, and has left you her property. Its a voice from heaven, Master Charles, telling yez to go back and claim your own.

(*A horn is heard in the distance.*)

Vincent—Ah! ha! travellers! (*Blows whistle*). I must have my men about me.

(*Enters from side twenty or thirty men, dressed raggedly and savagely, headed by one a lieutenant, with feathers in his hat.*)

Lieut.—What is the matter?

Vincent—(*rising*). Oh, some visitors. Do you hide in the bushes so as to be within call.

Exeunt comers, except Vincent. Outlaws to side of stage and Pat in cave.

(*Enter Major Taylor, Dawson and three soldiers in uniform.*)

Taylor—(*pointing to Vincent*). There he is, the mountain idiot alias Charles Vincent. Seize him! (*Vincent starts back.*) Surrender, Charles Vincent, and at least save your life.

Dawson—(*pulling handcuffs from his pocket.*)—to soldiers: Take him dead or alive!

Vincent—(*blows whistle, whereupon outlaws rush in, overpower soldiers, and seize Dawson and Major Taylor*). Not so fast gentlemen. You are not enough to capture me in my own stronghold. Take away from that man, (*pointing to Dawson*) his hand cuffs and revolvers and then release him. Take the arms away from those soldiers, and take them into the cave. You may guard that man awhile lon-

ger, points to Taylor. All except Taylor's guard, Dawson and Vincent exeunt into cave.

Vincent—(*takes papers from his breast, and holds it in his hand.*) Mr. Dawson you had at one time a warrant for my arrest for defalcation from the government. I was a defaulter, but never touched a cent of the money. It was all done to save that scoundrel. (*Pointing to Taylor.*) He had lost government funds by gambling, and begged so hard for me to save him, that I did so, by perjuring myself by making false returns. Through him I was driven into exile and the wilderness. Now my turn has come, (*Handing papers to Dawson.*) There is his confession to theft and murder given when he thought he was dying. I want you to take that and arrest him instead of me, and then exonerate me, for I am guiltless of any crime.

Dawson—(*heretofore has unfolded papers and read them.*) This is horrible: Major Taylor, is this true?

Taylor—Yes, that is true. What of it?

Dawson—What of it? You cold-blooded villain, do you dare to stand there and ask me such a question as that? (*To Vincent:*) You need not fear me any longer, for I will make such a report in your case that you will not be troubled any further, as Major Taylor has plenty to make the amount good, and he has acknowledged that your statement and his confession is true. Can I see my soldiers, before I go, or will you release them and allow them to go with me?

Vincent—I will release them after awhile. You can go into the cave where they are. (*Exit Dawson into cave.*)

Taylor—(*savagely.*) Where am I to go?

Vincent—(*to outlaws.*) You may release him and retire. I have a few words to say to him. (*Outlaws exeunt at side.*) Now Robert Taylor, you and I will settle. Stand there where you are, for I want to talk to you. Many years ago you took me for your tool and used me well. You had a mistress, who was likewise, your cousin, and you placed her on my track with all the seductive wiles that a pretty female devil could use on a man susceptible to the influence of the fair sex. She succeeded. She turned me from an honest man into a thief, and made me lose all that I could be proud of. You and she together banished me to these wilds where I have fared but little better than the wild beasts. But there is a just God above us, and in the end these things will be righted. Now your turn has come. You will be arrested, for if Dawson does not do so now, I will keep you here until some one else does. Now what have you to say for your treachery, you black-hearted villain?

Taylor—I have this to say. I hate you, you smooth-tongued hypocrite. You think to escape and expect me to suffer. No, I'll right this thing here and at once. (*Draws pistol and springs at Vincent, who draws, fires and kills Taylor, who falls. Outlaws, soldiers, Dawson and Pat rush in.*)

Vincent—(*to Dawson.*) I was unwise in trying to talk to him. He drew his pistol, which you will still see in his hand, to kill me. I killed him in self defense, nothing else. (*To outlaws.*) You know what to do with his body. (*They take off body to side.*) And now Mr. Dawson, if you will enter my cave with me, I will explain all and prove my innocence by proofs legible and positive.

(*Exeunt all. Dawson and Vincent into cave, Pat and outlaws to side.*)

(*Enter from r on road back of stage and over cave, Grace and Lottie Vincent, and Mary Donovan in traveling habits.*)

Grace—(*talking to right as if to persons outside.*) You may leave the horses there until we return. It looks as if it were inhabited here, and I am certain I heard the sound of a pistol a few minutes ago. We will see anyway. (*They all cross to left and disappear.*)

SCENE II—*Interior of cave. Around cave are settees covered with the skins of wild animals. A rude long table to left. At back a natural fire place in the rock. Depending from the ceiling a lamp. Firearms on hooks. As the scene is discovered Dawson and Vincent are discovered sitting on one of the settees.*

Vincent—I have told you all that can be told. I was not guilty of any crime. Taylor was, and of several of them. He is beyond your reach now, but Nellie Gordon was his accomplice and shared his money. You can reach her certainly.

Dawson—I'll tell you exactly what I will do, Captain. As you say Taylor is beyond my reach. As far as Miss Gordon is concerned, she had an attack of paralysis and is now a helpless imbecile in an Asylum. As far as you are concerned, I think I shall say nothing, except to do all I can to establish your innocence. You had better return to the States, for it is the best thing you can do. You need fear me no longer, but can call on me for aid whenever you wish to, or need to. But as I am already your prisoner, perhaps I am talking too confidently, for you could dispose of me and my small guard, so that we would never bother you any more.

Vincent—You are free Mr. Dawson, and I shall also release the soldiers who came with you. But you had better remain here with me to-night. I cannot give you any superlative accommodations, but I can promise you a soft couch of skins and plenty of cover. Pat can get up a meal by no means a mean one.

Dawson—Thanks for your offer, but with your leave, we will depart at once. Before nightfall we can reach a village, and to-morrow I can reach the overland stage and dismiss the soldiers, who can then return to their post. Will you kindly release them now. (*Rises.*)

Vincent—(*rising*). I will go with you at once and release them.

Dawson—At your pleasure. (*They exeunt at side. In a moment Vincent re-enters.*)

Vincent—(*shrugging his shoulders*). I was not to blame. Taylor was not disposed to be polite, and although I was the host, hospitality does not require that the host shall allow himself to be killed by his guest. I guess I am about even with them now, Taylor is dead and his body will be food for vultures at a convenient distance from here. Papers found on his person, goes to exonerate me. Nellie Gordon is paralyzed and in an asylum, a hopeless imbecile. I will away to the States. I am young yet, and can stand a wife who hates me and a daughter who probably has not been told of me, or if she has, she has been taught to hate me. I can outlive even this, but I would give worlds for one kiss of reconciliation from her, and a daughters' embrace from my child.

(*Enter Pat hurriedly.*)

Pat—A car avan sir, and females in it.

Vincent—Go, and see that they are not ill treated. Have the ladies conducted into this cave. (*Exit Pat.*)

(*Noise heard outside—screams of women and sounds of an encounter. Pat's voice heard outside saying:—*

Pat—Let them alone, the Master says the ladies are to be brought into the cave, and the men to be well treated. I'll break the first bloody head of the man, who does not do as the Master says.

(*As Vincent steps towards exit, enter Pat hatless, and following him Grace Vincent, Lottie Vincent and Mary Donovan.*)

Vincent—(*starts*)—(*aside*). My God! am I mistaken, or is not this my own wife. (*Aloud.*) Be seated ladies, and accept what poor hospitality I have to offer. (*The ladies sit down on settees.*)

Grace—I am glad to hear that we have fallen into hands which can dispense hospitality so gracefully, for with our first reception, I feared we were lost.

Vincent—Never fear, lady, you shall not be harmed. May I ask where you are travelling? and from where?

Grace—I do not know where. I have a very unhappy history, that I will tell you, and perhaps it may gain your kind sympathy for me.

Pat—(*pointing to Mary*). Master! I believe—

Vincent—(*sternly*.) Keep quiet sir, and go and sit down. (*Pat sits down on settee but keeps staring at Mary who seems greatly confused.*) Proceed madame.

Grace—About fifteen years ago I was married to a man I did not love. Pique at the indifference of the man I did love prompted the step. After our marriage we went to the old home of my husband on our bridal trip, and there I overheard a conversation between my husband and his mother in which she disowned and cursed him. He had told me that he would be rich, and finding him poor, I detested instead of disliking him, for I believed he had purposely deceived me. I left him and have never seen him since.

Vincent—(*aside*.) Heaven help me to control myself. It is my wife.

Pat—(*edging up to Mary, takes hold of her arm.*)

Mary—(*jirking away from him*). Hands off, you bloody robber, or I'll scratch your eyes out of your bald head.

Grace—Be quiet Mary. (*Pat starts to Vincent!*) I then went to my home and after awhile my daughter was born. Years passed and the bitterness died with them. The man I thought I loved, proved to be a scoundrel, and I no longer loved him, as I would sit day by day with my young daughter so like her father. (*Vincent places his hands over his eyes and shakes as if sobbing*). Why, what is the matter, am I calling up unpleasant thoughts?

Vincent—(*uncovering his eyes*.) No, pray proceed, madam.

Grace—As I was saying, as I sat day by day alone with my thoughts, I could see how unjust I had been to my husband, and how good he had meant to be to me. These thoughts brought a better frame of mind, and then I knew that instead of deserting him when his mother cast him off that I should have clung still closer to him. With this reproach upon my mind, love for my absent husband grew up in my lonesome heart, and grew until jealousy of another woman, who I believed cared for him, made my love more intense. I determined to find him, and after months of weary research, only missed sight of him by a few mo-

ments, to find that he had fled from the law, and then I went back to my desolate home, giving all my thoughts and care to my young daughter, but still hunting for news of my lost husband. His servant disappeared shortly after him, and we lost trace of him, and I had given up all hope until two things happened, one was the death of my husband's mother, who left her immense property to my husband if living, and to my daughter if he was dead; the other incident was that I received a note from the man I was once infatuated with, telling me that *he* had found out that my husband was hiding in the Rocky Mountains, and that he was going to find him and arrest him for the scoundrel that he was. I started at once and am this far on my search. Do not detain me sir, but suffer me to proceed on my search.

Vincent—The name of the false friend was Robert Taylor, was it not?

Grace—(*shrinking from him and putting her arm around Lottie's neck*). Merciful heaven! what can this mean?

Vincent—The name of the woman whom you were jealous of, was Nellie Gordon.

(*Grace buries her face in her hands as if bewildered.*)

Vincent—The name of your husband was——

Grace—(*starting up and wringing her hands*). “What in God's name was his name! Who are you sir, who knows my history so well?”

Vincent—(*rising*). The name of your husband was Charles Vincent and is still. (*Holding out his arms.*) He stands before you Grace, blesses you for your love and asks you to come to his arms.

(*Grace rushes into his arms, and Lottie rises and moves towards him, Grace swoons, and Vincent carries her to a settee.*)

Lottie—Papa have you no welcome for me?

Vincent—(*embracing her*). Are you my daughter? Let me look at you darling, for it is a sight my eyes have been hungry for. (*They go to Grace and try and revive her.*)

(*Mary rises to go to her mistress, when Pat catches her round the waist and kisses her.*)

Mary—(*slapping him vigorously*). Take that, and that, and that, you unmannerly brute. There is only one man in this world that can kiss me wid my full consent, and he has gone to be a pirate.

Pat—(*kissing her again*). I know his name, it is Pat Flavan, and I'm the same son of a gun.

Vincent—Yes, Mary, that is Pat Flavan.

Mary—Where is your livery?

Pat—Its in the stable sure.

Grace—(recovering and leaning on *Lottie's* shoulder). Merciful Father, I thank thee. Oh, my husband! (crying) what have I to answer for. Here in rags, with unkempt hair, sunken cheeks and in this den.

Vincent—Never mind my own wife, a barber will soon tidy the hair, we will leave this den, the rags will have to go, and happiness will soon bring the color to my cheeks.

Mary—Pat, you wild Irishman, put that ugly mouth in shape and I'll kiss it, if it kills me the next minute. (*Kisses him*).

Pat—That comes from the same old jug and gets better with age. Now will ye be Mrs. Pat Flavan, say quick?

Mary—If yu've got a priest handy, I'me yours in a minute.

Vincent—Come to me my daughter. (*Lottie approaches and he puts one arm around her and one around Grace.*) Let us kneel down for we have much to be thankful for. (*They kneel.*) Re-united at last, the present happiness repays me for all my past misery. Wife—(*kisses her*)—daughter—(*kisses Lottie*)—and soon we will have home, and over all the happy thought that my dream was true, and I have stepped into the sunshine and from under the cloud of MY MOTHER'S CURSE. (*Tableau*).

(*Stage and house is darkened and scene is changed to parlor in Alice Vincent's house, as in Act I.*)

—EPILOGUE.—

Vincent rehabilitated, is discovered in easy chair, while on a stool at his side is *Lottie* looking up into his face. His hand rests lovingly on her head. *Grace Vincent* sits at table with her hands folded in her lap looking at them smiling.

Lottie—What makes you smile, mama?

Grace—I am smiling because I am happy, and besides you make a pretty picture.

Lottie—Dear papa, you don't know how proud I am of you.

Vincent—My daughter, you shall never have cause to feel otherwise. But where is Pat and his bride? Call them in, for we must have them to make our happiness complete.

Lottie—Here they come.

(*Enter Pat and Mary, arm in arm.*)

Pat—Now Mary, listen to me: You are my property now, and I had to be a pirate to catch you, and if I want to kiss you four times a minute, I don't want to hear any objection.

Mary—And ye'll not Pat, for ye've been a brave boy and stuck by the master and I'll stick by you now like a porous plaster.

Vincent—(*rising and standing with one arm around Lottie and the other resting on Grace's shoulder.*) The story is told, and the play is ended. Out of the darkness there is light. Out of the agony of Gethsemane comes the happiness of love and joy. As for me, I have gained a wife and found a daughter. As for these, (*pointing to Pat and Mary*) they are examples of devoted faithfulness, growing stronger with every demand, unwearying and as faithful as Heaven itself.

[*Curtain.*]

—THE END.—





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